

S E R M O N S

On the following

S U B J E C T S;

- I. SAINTS Imperfect whilst on EARTH.
II, III, IV, V, VI. SAINTS Compleat in GLORY.
VII, VIII. The BELIEVER Sealed.
IX. The SAINT's Extremity God's Opportunity.

WITH AN

A B S T R A C T

OF

Consul *Dean's* NARRATIVE, relating to
his suffering Shipwreck, and wonderful Pre-
servation, in the Year 1710.

By SAMUEL WILSON.

Published at the Request of the Church under his Care.

L O N D O N,

Printed, and Sold by AARON WARD, at the King's-
Arms in Little-Britain; and JOSEPH FISHER,
against Tom's Coffee-house in Cornhill. 1735.

2 E R M O A S

On the following

S U B J E C T S

1. SAINT: IMPERIAL WHITE ON EARTH
2. IV, VI. SAINTS COMPLETION GORY
3. VII. THE BATTLE OF SE
4. THE SAINTS BENEVOLENT GORE



Copy of the NARRATIVE, relating to
his father's life, and his
services, in the
Revolution

B. SAMUEL WILSON

Printed at the Request of the General Assembly of the
City of London

Printed by A. MILLAR, at the
Sign of the Sun, in Pall Mall
1753



TO THE
Church of Christ,
Assembling in
GOODMAN'S-FIELDS.

*Much esteemed Friends, and dearly beloved
in the Lord :*

TEN Years are almost now
run out, since you first call'd
me to labour in the Word
and Doctrine among you :
An Employment, I trust, as delightful
to me, as, through the abundant Good-
ness of God, it has been made, in
A 2 some

some Measure, serviceable and acceptable to you.

I have sometimes been thrown into a Degree of Confusion, to think I should be prevailed with, so young and unexperienced, to accept the pastoral Charge; a Charge so weighty and important. Under God, I am much indebted to you hitherto in the Discharge of it; who have been ready, upon every Occasion, to assist me with your Prayers and Advice, and, with the utmost Gratitude, to your Honour I mention it, you have always treated me with the greatest Tenderness, Affection, and Generosity.

When I think of you as my Care,
how awful the Reflection! *Who is*
suf-

The Dedication.

V

sufficient for these Things? God is my Witness, that my Heart's Desire and Prayer to him is, to obtain Mercy, to be faithful in every Part of my Work, watching over you with all becoming Care and Concern, as one who is to give an Account. And as the ministerial Furniture is the Gift of God, and all Success depends on his Blessing, I promise my self you will not be wanting, in secret, in the Family, as well as in the Church, to send up your Cries to Heaven, that he who gives Bread to the Eater, and Seed to the Sower, would continually direct to such Portions of Scripture as may suit your Case, and, under a divine Agency, be made as useful as seasonable.

God

God has said many great and glorious Things concerning his *Sion*: The Church is his Temple, where the spiritual Sacrifices of Praise and Thanksgiving are offer'd up unto him in the Mediator's Name: He will dwell in the Midst of her, as her Glory and Defence; *nor shall the Gates of Hell prevail against her.* And as this is true of *Sion* in general, so the least Hill in that Mountain of God, is under his Care and Patronage; to every one of these, the Promise runs, as well as to his ministring Servants, *Lo, I am with you always, even to the End of the World*^a; and every Thing is included in that Engagement; for his Presence is the Glory of worship-

^a Matt. xxviii. 20.

ping Assemblies, and the great Secu-
rity of religious Societies.

Purity of Doctrine, Impartiality in
Discipline, Holiness of Life, and
Unity of Affection, were the distin-
guishing Ornaments of the primitive
Churches : Nor should it be slightly
passed over by you when calling to
Mind what God has done for you ;
that the *dreadful* Errors of *Deism*,
Arianism, *Socinianism*, *Sabellianism*, and
Pelagianism, have not hitherto appear-
ed among you, to your Trouble or
Defilement. I need not tell you, that
it is a Day of Apostacy, in which
many lay in wait to deceive : Some
are striking at the very Foundation of
all Religion ; others denying and ri-
diculing Revelation, as unnecessary or
contradictory ; and great Numbers
dispu-

disputing the Deity, despising the Righteousness, and blaspheming the Person of our Redeemer: Some are making a Jest of the Work of Regeneration, and the Efficacy of the Spirit of God in it; though without the Knowledge of the one, and the Experience of the other, they cannot see the Kingdom of God: And not a few are looking on with a criminal Indifference, at the Spread of the Contagion. Permit me, therefore, in Faithfulness, solemnly to warn you to beware of those who would insinuate doctrinal Error is a harmless Thing; that Men may safely commune together, though they differ about the Object of Worship, the Foundation of their Hope, and the Grace which is necessary to make them meet for Heaven: The God
you

The Dedication. ix

you serve is jealous of his Glory ; he has put his Word into your Hands, let that be your Rule ; be serious in your Inquiries after, and earnestly contend for the Faith once delivered to the Saints ; hold fast the faithful Word : If others will not endure sound Doctrine, remember it is a Trust committed to you, which you are to transmit pure and uncorrupted to the rising Generation. I bless God, and it is the Joy of my Soul, that you are not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ ; hold that fast which you have ; let no Man take your Crown.

Your steady Adherence to the Rules laid down in the Gospel, in receiving Members, in admonishing the Disorderly, and rejecting the Profane, will be as much your Security as Honour.

a

Faith-

The Dedication.

Faithfulness and Prudence should direct your Inquiries, regulate your Examinations, and determine your Sentence. Some Cases be-speak Compassion, whilst others demand Severity ; nor are you to know the dearest Friend or nearest Relative, where Censure is justly deserv'd, lest Religion suffer, and the Ways of God be evil spoken of.

In Matters of an indifferent Nature, Forbearance, and a Readiness to yield to each other, will tend to preserve that Peace and Harmony which, for so many Years, has been your Mercy. Watch against angry Disputes and warm Debates, as what tend to Strife, Confusion, and every evil Work. And above all, remember the Eyes of God and Man are upon you, as to your Walk and Conversation :

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versation, your Profession supposes you are gracious ; and where Grace is, there will be the visible Fruits of it ; the World expects more from you than from others ; and your Attachment to the most evangelical Principles, will be no Proof to them of your Piety, where there is an unbecoming Deportment. Remember, the most provoking Wounds which Christ receives, are in the House of his Friends. And shall I repeat the Advice so often given you in publick, be as much with God in secret as possible, and as enabled by his Spirit, be earnest with him, that you may obtain Grace to be exemplary in Life, adorning the Doctrines of God your Saviour in all Things, and that you may be ripening for Heaven, and, in due Time, be transplanted from the Church

xii *The Dedication.*

Church Militant, to that which is
Triumphant.

I have only to add ; the following
Sermons being printed at your united
Request, I have purposely disposed
them into that Order, and contracted
them within that Compass which may
be most suitable to Family Worship :
That they may be of farther Use and
Service to you in the more private
Perusal of them, as, I trust, they
were of some Use in their publick De-
livery, and attended with a Blessing
where Providence shall send them, is
the earnest Request of,

24 OCT 62
Your Affectionate Friend

*Barbican,
March 21,
1735.*

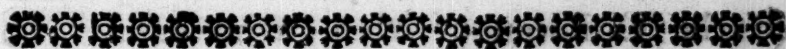
and Servant, in the Gospel,

SAMUEL WILSON.



S E R M O N I.

SAINTS ON EARTH imperfect.



I COR. xiii. 10.

*But when that which is perfect is come,
then that which is in part shall be
done away.*



THE Apostle having asserted the Necessity of Love to God, and the Saints for his Sake, as that which enters into the Experience, and is essential to the Character of a real Christian, without which, though he should speak with the Tongues of Men, or of Angels, he
B would

2 Saints on Earth imperfect.

would be no better than a *sounding Brass*, or a *tinkling Cymbal*; yea, though he had the *Gift of Prophecy*, and understood all *Myseries*, and all *Knowledge*, and though he had all *Faith*, so as to remove *Mountains*, and though, from a *Benevolence* to humane Nature, and a generous Concern for the *Distresses* of his *Fellow-Creatures*, he might bestow all his *Goods* to feed the *Poor*; and from an *inviolable Attachment* to his *Profession*, should give his *Body* to be burned; yet, destitute of this *divine Principle*, he would be of no *Account* with that *God*, who searches the *Hearts*, and tries the *Reins* of the *Children of Men*, who cannot be deceived by the largest *Pretensions*, or the most *plausible Appearances*.

Having thus represented the *Importance* of this most excellent *Grace*, he proceeds to describe it in its *Nature* and *Properties*: *Charity suffereth long, envieth not, vaunteth not it self, is not puffed up, doth not behave it self unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil, rejoiceth not in Iniquity; but in the Truth, beareth all Things, believeth all Things, hopeth all Things, endureth all Things*. And, to this he adds, as that which distinguishes it from some other of the *christian Graces*, particularly *Faith* and *Hope*, that it *abideth*, and never *faileth*; and, on this *Account*, he gives it the *Preference*: *Prophecies will fail, Tongues*

Saints on Earth imperfect. 3

Tongues shall cease, Knowledge, in its present Imperfection, shall vanish away; now we think and speak at best, but as Children under Age, seeing through a Glass darkly; but when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away; then shall we see Face to Face, and know even as we also are known.

The Words visibly divide themselves into two Parts:

As, I. They suppose the Imperfection of the best of God's People, whilst on Earth. And,

II. Assert the compleat Felicity or glorious Perfection, which they shall be possessed of in Heaven; *but when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.*

To form a just Apprehension of the Imperfection which attends the Believer, whilst travelling through this World, in his Way to a better, we must consider it under a threefold View; as it is natural, criminal, and comparative.

I. Natural Imperfection: This is found with every Order of Beings, who are finite, limited, and dependant.

Man was at first a most beauteous and happy Creature, innocent, pure and spot-

4 Saints on Earth imperfect.

less, intelligent, wise and prudent, having *more Understanding than the Beasts of the Earth, and made wiser than the Fowls of the Heaven*^a. The Result of the divine Consultation, held between the eternal Three, was, *let us make Man in our own Image, after our Likeness, and let him have Dominion over the Fish of the Sea, and over the Fowls of the Air, and over the Cattle, and over all the Earth, and over every creeping Thing, that creepeth upon the Earth*^b. Blessed Creature, with a large and fair Inheritance! Made upright, pronounced to be very good, by him who could not be mistaken; made lower, indeed, but it was only a little lower than the Angels; placed in the midst of the Paradise of God; thoroughly furnished with every Thing he could want or desire, under the Smiles of his Creator, and Lord of the Universe. Man, thus in Honour, was yet imperfect, as he owed his All to the Bounty of his Creator, so he continued to enjoy it on the Tenure of his Will; all his intellectual Powers, and most agreeable Entertainments, arising from the Contemplation of the Mysteries of Nature, Providence, and Religion, or the Satisfaction, which flowed from the moderate Use of the Creature, fell infinitely short of the Perfections and Blessed-

^a Job xxxv. 11;

^b Gen. i. 26,

Saints on Earth imperfect. 5

ness of the great God. He knew much, and, perhaps, in a very easy Way; yet he knew not all Things, nor could he by searching find out God, or understand the Almighty unto Perfection. Though there was no Error found in his Judgment; yet there was not that intuitive Knowledge of Truth, which is peculiar to Omniscience. His Affections centered on God their proper Object; but they were the Affections of a Creature. His Will inclined to every Thing that was excellent; but was not immutable. So that in his best Estate, it might be said to him, *Canst thou measure the Waters in the Hollow of thine Hand, and mete out the Heavens with a Span, and comprehend the Dust of the Earth in a Measure, and weigh the Mountains in Scales, or the Hills in a Balance? Canst thou direct the Spirit of the Lord, or as his Counsellor teach him? Who taught him Knowledge, or shewed to him the Way of Understanding? Behold! Man, whole Nations of Men; yea, humane Nature at large, is, in his Account, but as a Drop of the Bucket, and as the small Dust of the Balance: All before him are as Nothing, less than Nothing and Vanity*: Nor, is there a Seraph around his Throne, how pure, how bright, how glorious soever, but is in this Sense imperfect; they are all

† Isaiah xl. 12, 13, 14, 15, 17.

6 *Saints on Earth imperfect.*

the Production of the Father of Spirits, who alone is underived, self-sufficient, and independant.

There is none like unto the Lord, who is great, whose Name is great in Might; to him, as to the King of Nations, Fear, and the most profound Reverence, are due; forasmuch, as among all the wise Men of the Nations, and in all their Knowledge, there is none like unto him; he is the true God, the living God, and an everlasting King; he made the Earth, by his Power; he hath established the Worlds, by his Wisdom; and hath stretched out the Heavens, by his Discretion; he is the high and lofty One, who inhabiteth Eternity; his Name is holy, and he dwells in a high and holy Place; who, in Heaven, can be compared unto the Lord; and who, among the Sons of the Mighty, can be likened unto him? He hath made the Earth, the Man, and the Beast, that are on the Ground, by his great Power, and by his out-stretched Arm. Wisdom and Might are his, he changeth the Times and Seasons, he removeth Kings, and setteth up Kings, he giveth Wisdom to the Wise, and Knowledge to them who know Understanding, he is God of Gods, and Lord of Kings; his Kingdom is an everlasting Kingdom, and his Dominion from Generation to Generation, his Dominion is an everlasting Dominion, and all
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Saints on Earth imperfect.

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the Inhabitants of the Earth are reputed as nothing before him ; he doth according to his Will, in the Armies of Heaven, and among the Inhabitants of the Earth, he is the Lord, the Lord God Almighty, who made the World, and all Things therein ; the Lord of Heaven and Earth, who dwelleth not in Temples made with Hands, neither is worshiped with Men's Hands, as though he needed any Thing, seeing he giveth to all Life, and Breath, and all Things. He hath determined the Times before appointed, and the Bounds of our Habitations, who worketh all Things according to the Counsel of his own Will, and in whom we live, move, and have our Being ; so that here he dwells alone, nor will he give his Glory to another ; some Creatures are, indeed, more perfect than others, and rise higher in their Resemblance of him who is infinitely perfect ; but the most exalted of them are not to be compared with the most High, in whose Sight, the Heavens are not clean, and who chargeth his Angels with Folly.

II. There is an Imperfection which is criminal.

This consists in the Loss of that Rectitude and Holiness, which the Law requires, which the Creator at first stamped on the Mind of Man, and of which Sin and Rebellion

8 *Saints on Earth imperfect.*

bellion have despoiled him; together with that Propensity to Evil, and Aversion to every Thing that is Good, which discovers it self, in the Omission of Duty, and Commission of Evil.

Here we may distinguish between the Continuance of our Powers and Faculties, in their Being, and natural Exercise, and that Purity and Spirituality, which attended them before the Fall. As the Angels, who kept not their first Estate, and are reserved in Chains, under Darkness, to the Coming of the great Day, are powerful and subtle, though impure and malicious Spirits, so we, have our Understanding, Will, and Affections now, as *Adam* in Innocence; though with this melancholy Difference, all his Faculties, in their various Use and Exercise, were devoted to the Honour, and imployed in the Service, of his great Creator; but the Case is far otherwise with us, we are now wise, indeed, but it is to do Evil; there is a Will in Man, but it is to make Provision for the Flesh to fulfil the Lusts thereof; he has Affections, but they are earthly and sensual; Lasciviousness, Lusts, Excess of Wine, Revellings, and Banquetings, suit him best, and please him most. In the Pride of his Countenance, he will not seek God, if he could have his Wish, he would banish him entirely his Thoughts; and, when he speaks out the
Lan-

Saints on Earth imperfect. 9

Language of his Heart, it is unto God, Depart from me, I desire not the Knowledge of thy Ways: What is the Almighty that I should serve him? What Profit should I have in praying unto him? If Ingratitude is a Crime of a heinous Nature, the very Brutes may upbraid the Children of Men with it; for *the Ox knows his Owner, and the Ass his Master's Crib*; but they know not, they consider not, but as a *sinful Generation, laden with Iniquities, as a Seed of evil Doers, Children that are Corrupters, they forsake the Lord, and provoke the Holy One of Israel*^a. Nor is this Representation heightened, or aggravated, since we have the same Account from God himself, that *he saw the Wickedness of Man was great in the Earth, and every Imagination of the Thought of his Heart was only evil continually*^e. And our Lord, who needed not that any should tell him what was in Man, confirms this by observing, that, *from within, out of the Heart of Man, proceeds evil Thoughts, Adulteries, Fornications, Murders, Thefts, Covetousness, Wickedness, Deceit, Lasciviousness, an evil Eye, Blasphemy, Pride, Foolishness: All these Evils come from within, and defile the Man*^f.

^a Isaiah i. 3, 4.

^e Gen. vi. 5.

^f Mark vii. 21, 22, 23.

That

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That the Want of original Righteousness, where it is the Consequence of a Crime, or Disobedience, is not meerly our Unhappinefs, but our Fault, appears from considering the Nature of the Law, with the Reasonableness of its Demands, and the Continuance and Immutability of its Obligation. The Law requires Truth in the inward Parts, or Purity of Mind, as well as universal Obedience; this it required of *Adam*, and it found him, as God had made him, absolutely upright. Sin committed, introduced a dreadful Change in the Creature, but none in the Law-giver; God is as much a Sovereign, his Law as strict in its Requirements, since Man was drove out of Paradise, as when in the Enjoyment of the Sweets of that delightful Place.

How harmless soever some may think the Corruption of humane Nature to be, *David* introduces it as an Article of his Confession, and mourns over it before the Lord, when in the Bitterness of his Soul he cries out, *Behold I was shapen in Iniquity, and in Sin did my Mother conceive me* ^s.

Here the inanimate and irrational Parts of the Creation, have the Advantage of the wicked, ungodly and impenitent, they are as perfect as their Creator pleased to make

^s Psal. li. 5.

them,

Saints on Earth imperfect. 11

them, and their Imperfection is purely natural, neither criminal, nor judicial, but, with Respect to fallen Man, it may be said, *How is the Gold become dim! How is the most fine Gold changed^h!* To say that he is now naturally holy and inclined to good, without a wrong Bias or corrupt Inclination, is to contradict universal Experience: To affirm it was always thus, is to oppose divine Revelation; and to imagine that it is venial, or in no Degree criminal, is an Affront to the Purity, and injurious to the Righteousness of the great Legislator, who has solemnly declared, that *no one Iota, or Tittle of his Law shall pass away, till all be fulfilledⁱ*. And to this we may add,

III. There is a comparative Imperfection, of which the best of Saints are the Subjects, whilst in this World.

This appears in comparing the Temper of our Minds, the Language of our Lips, and the Conduct of our Life, with the Law, that righteous Rule of Obedience, which is pure in its Nature, and large in its Reach and Extent.

Who among the sanctified whilst here, can say, his Heart is so clean as it ought to be, and wash his Hands in absolute Innocency? *The Law is holy*, says the great Apo-

^h Lament. iv. 1.

ⁱ Matt. v. 18.

12 Saints on Earth imperfect.

ble, and the Commandment holy, and just, and good; he adds, *I know that the Law is spiritual, but I am carnal, sold under Sin^k*. In this he bears a Testimony to the Excellence of the Precept, whilst he is humbled under a Sense of his own Deficiency. And this being true of all the Redeemed of the Lord on this side Glory, it is their Mercy, that though the Law will admit of no Abatement, and rigorously demands Perfection, Christ is made to them the End of the Law for Righteousness. He has magnified the Law, and made it honourable, nor can the Law now condemn his Members, being fully satisfied in all its Demands by his Obedience and Sufferings.

But, if we view them under the Change which supernatural and efficacious Grace has made in them in Regeneration, *all old Things are past away, and behold all Things are become new^l*; they are quite other Persons than formerly, acting from different Principles, upon nobler Motives, in another Manner, and with higher Views, than when walking according to the Course of this World, and the Customs of the Children of Disobedience, who are led Captive by Satan at his Will; this may in some Measure account for the Epithets of just, perfect and upright, given in Scripture to ma-

^k Rom. vii. 12—14.

^l 2 Cor. v. 17.

ny of them, whose Failings standing upon Record prove, that though there was a very great Difference between them and the ungodly, yet they had not fully attained, neither were they compleatly perfect.

And as there are various Seasons in which the Elect are gathered in, some called at the first, others at the third, and some not till the eleventh Hour, some in Christ before others; so there are different Measures of Grace communicated to them, some are enabled to run with greater Speed the Race which is set before them, and to gain a larger Victory over Corruption, Satan and the World, than others, who are as truly in the Family, and designed for the same Place of Bliss and Glory, though moving more slowly in their Way to it. *Paul* himself, after he had fought the good Fight of Faith, and almost finished his Course, within Sight of the Goal, and ready to receive his Crown, expresses a noble Emulation, that no one should out-strip him: This one Thing, says he, I do, *forgetting the Things which are behind, I press towards the Mark for the Prize of the high Calling of God in Christ Jesus^m.*

Here the Saint with Blushing and holy Confusion, thinking on his Helps and Advantages, his Obligations and Expectations,

^m Phil. iii. 13, 14.

14 *Saints on Earth imperfect.*

is ready to cry out, alas! What an unprofitable Servant! What a Cumberer of the Ground! How lean, barren and unfruitful! When others, planted in a Soil less promising, are fat and flourishing, visibly thriving as Trees of Righteousness, the Planting of the Lord, in whom he is now, as well as he will hereafter be glorious. He is far from repining, dares not murmur, or foolishly charge his God. The least Degree of Grace is infinitely more than he deserves; nor does he envy his Brethren, but rejoices in the Goodness of God towards them, he blames himself, and only himself, that he copies no more exactly after them, and is enabled to make no more Use of their Experience and Comfort, as a Means to excite his Diligence, and to quicken him in the Paths of Holiness. We are not, indeed, to expect the same Degrees of Light, Knowledge and Understanding, the same extraordinary Gifts and miraculous Endowments with the Apostles, or some eminent Martyrs or Confessors; their Work was special, and their Furniture proportionable: Nor will it be objected to us in the great Day, that some have had more Faith, Hope and Joy, than our selves, it is the Prerogative of the God of Heaven to divide to every Man as he will; and the weakest Babe has the one Thing needful, even that good Part which shall never be taken from him, Glo-

ry being connected rather with Grace in its Kind or Nature, than with it in its Degree: But as every one to whom it is given will be solicitous after more, so there are few among the tallest Cedars in God's Libanon, but have Reason to observe, and are ready to acknowledge, that there are others who have gone beyond them.

And, after all the large Experience, clear Discoveries, and unusual Measures of Grace bestowed on the great Apostle; though he could say he came not behind the chief of the Apostles in any Thing, and had been caught up into the third Heavens, and admitted for a Time to look on some of the Glories of that blissful Place; though he could speak of Christ with Propriety as well as Pleasure, and say, *I know whom I have believedⁿ: He hath loved me, and given himself for me^o*; yet was he imperfect: Nor was there any Comparison between his Knowledge, Holiness and Joy, whilst in this earthly House of his Tabernacle, and that which he was possessed of when before the Throne in Presence of a risen Jesus.

Thus we see Perfection, in the most exalted Sense of the Word, is only to be found with the great and glorious God; and he is so absolutely and unchangeably in his Na-

ⁿ 2 Tim. i. 12.

^o Gal. ii. 20.

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ture, Counsel and Will. Comparative Imperfection is the constant Appendage of created limited Beings: And that which is criminal is confined to Earth and Hell. Whilst the most we can say of the Believer on Earth is, that he sees in part, and knows in part: And, is this a just Representation? What exalted Thoughts, O my Soul, shouldst thou then entertain of the great *I am*! Who has all Perfection centering in him, and from whom, as the Fountain of all Good, flows every Degree of it found in either World. Is there any Thing to be compared with him as thy Portion? Will any Thing short of Perfection satisfy the Cravings of an immortal Mind? Seek no longer the living among the dead; the Creature has it not, cannot give it. Who would live on broken Cisterns, when there is the Fountain of living Water.

This also accounts for the Preference which the Saint gives to his God above every Thing else, and discovers the Wisdom of his Choice, whilst he had rather endure Afflictions, and suffer the Loss of all Things, than excite the Resentment, and provoke the Indignation of an all-sufficient God, in whose Favour stands the Life of his Soul.

And who can describe the Terror, the Confusion, and bitter Anguish, which will attend the Disappointment of the wicked; they

they choose the World for their God, and God, in Anger, says, They are joined to their Idols, let them alone. How is this their Way, their Folly, since the World, and all that is in it, is passing away? Their Mistake is partly evident now, since they are dissatisfied with the largest Acquisitions, and in vain, crying to their Idol, *Give, give!* But the full Discovery of their Madness, as well as Impiety, is reserved to another Day; when, with gnawing Grief, and tormenting Despair, reflecting on the fatal Delusion, they shall cry out, *Undone, undone* for ever!

And is the Saint criminally, as well as comparatively, imperfect whilst on Earth? How great is his Mercy, that there is a relative Perfection provided for him in *another*, that whilst defective in himself, he is compleat in Jesus; who, by one Offering, for ever perfected those who are sanctified! This is the great Support of the Saint as the Ground of his Hope towards God, whilst in this World; and will be the Matter of his Praise and Triumph in a better. It is the spotless Robe of his Redeemer's Righteousness, that he produces in answer to the Accusations of Satan, the Remonstrances of Conscience, and the Charges of a malicious World; the Merit of this he daily pleads before the Throne; nor could he think of Death without Horror and Trembling, but as interested in his Death; who, having

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purged

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purged away his Sins by his Sacrifice on Earth, lives in Heaven to plead his Cause, and will, at length, introduce him into the divine Presence without Spot or Blemish, holy and unreprouable in God's Sight.

And can the Saint, having this God for his reconciled Father, Friend, and Portion, complain in the Want, or under the Loss of what, at best, is but external and foreign to his principal Happiness; and what might rather prove a Snare and an Hindrance, than a Blessing to him? What if *the Fig-tree should not blossom, neither should Fruit be in the Vines, the Labour of the Olives should cease, and the Fields yield no Meat, the Flock shall be cut off from the Fold, and there should be no Herd in the Stall*^v; yet, is it not enough that the Lord God is his Strength? ought he not, will he not rejoice in the God of his Salvation? if more were needful, could not All-sufficiency supply? How do Angels, and the Spirits of just Men live? they want not, they desire not earthly Treasures, they have their All they wish for, or can enjoy, whilst they dwell in the Presence of God; where there is *Fulness of Joy, and at his right Hand where there are Pleasures for evermore.*

^v Hab. iii. 17.

SER-



S E R M O N II.

SAINTS compleat in GLORY.



I COR. xiii. 10.

*But when that which is perfect is come,
then that which is in part shall be
done away.*



T is a most affecting Thought,
that no one Man, whilst here,
is as wise and holy as he ought
to be; nor an Individual of
the human Species so happy,
but he wishes to be more so;
nor is it more surprizing than true, that the
best have generally the worst Usage, Trou-
ble,

20 *Saints compleat in Glory.*

ble, Reproach, Opposition, and Persecution, attending them almost all their Way to Glory: So that with the Apostle, they agree in concluding, that if in this World only they have hope, *they are of all Men most miserable.* This may seem, at first View, to cast a dark Shade on Providence, and reflect on the Wisdom and Goodness of the Judge of the whole Earth; but when we call to Mind, that all necessary Supports are given to the Saints by the Way, and now and then a refreshing Cordial handed down, to encourage their Faith, quicken their Hope, and that, e'er long, the present Scenes, which we are sometimes tempted to think, are shuffled together in a Kind of Confusion, shall be brought out in their proper Order and respective Beauties; when it will be fully known, that it was good for them to be afflicted, and that only where it was absolutely necessary they were in Trouble; and whilst all Things under a divine Agency, worked together for their Good: They will then see with Transports of Joy, and the utmost Gratitude, that their sorest Trials and Afflictions were but light and momentary, working out for them a far more exceeding and eternal Weight of Glory.

God has never promised his People two Heavens, one in Time, another in Eternity; Part they have in Hand, and a most sweet, precious and invaluable Part it is;
but

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but the best is reserved to last ; for, *when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.* Where we may observe,

- I. An Intimation of the Certainty of the Blessing, the Apostle speaks of it with full Assurance it shall come.
- II. The Distance of it ; it shall come, but not as yet.
- III. The Desirableness of it ; it was what he waited and longed for, as the Consummation of Bliss, and the crowning Mercy.

I. Perfection, though unattainable here, shall certainly meet the Saint in Glory.

This is secured by the immutable Purpose of him whose Counsel shall stand ; and *who is not a Man that he should lye, or the Son of Man that he should repent.* He hath not appointed his People unto Wrath, but to obtain Salvation^a. It is his good Pleasure to give them a Kingdom^b. He hath chosen them in his Son, before the Foundation of the World, that they should be holy and without blame before him in Love, and they shall at length obtain the Inheritance, to which they were predestinated according to the Purpose of him, who worketh all Things after the

^a 1 Theff. v. 9.

^b Luke xii. 32.

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Counsel of his own Will^c. These he did fore-know and predestinate, to be conformed to the Image of his Son^d, and will therefore call, justify, and glorify them.

This his gracious Design he has made known in many great and precious Promises; which are not yea and nay, but yea and Amen in Christ, to the Glory of his Truth and Faithfulness: He hath said, that *he will give Grace and Glory, and withhold no good Thing from them who walk uprightly^e*. He commanded his Prophets of old, to say to the Righteous, that it shall be well with them; and as he numbers the Hairs of their Heads, whilst on Earth, so, *since the Beginning of the World, Men have not heard, nor perceived by the Ear, neither hath the Eye seen, besides God himself, what he hath prepared for those who fear him^f*. Our Lord is very expresse on this Head, when he says of his Sheep, *I give unto them eternal Life, and they shall never perish^g*. *In my Father's House are many Mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you: I go to prepare a Place for you. And if I go, I will come again, and receive you unto my self; that where I am, there ye may be also^h*. With this View he took Flesh, obey'd the Law, and became a Curse, that in the full

^c Ephes. i. 4, and 11.

lxxxiv. 11.

xiv. 2, 3.

^d Rom. viii. 29, 30.

^f Isa. lxiv. 4.

^g John x. 28.

^e Psal.

^h Chap.

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Merit of his Righteousness, he might demand it of him, who can now be just, and the Justifier of every Believer; *Father, I will that those also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, to behold my Glory*ⁱ. And the great Apostle speaking in the Name of all the Saints, says, *We know, that if the earthly House of this Tabernacle were dissolved, we have a Building of God, an House not made with Hands, eternal in the Heavens*^k; and, *when Christ, who is our Life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in Glory*^l. And in the exulting Language of Triumph, he observes, there was *laid up for him a Crown of Righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, should give him at that Day*; and adds, *not to me only, but to them also who love his appearing*^m. In the lively Expectation of this, the holy Martyrs, that Cloud of Witnesses, took joyfully the spoiling of their Goods, and laid down their Lives, knowing in themselves, that they had in *Heaven a better and a more enduring Substance*ⁿ: Nor is it the peculiar Mercy of faithful Ministers, but of all the Redeemed of the Lord, *that when the chief Shepherd appears, they shall receive a Crown of Glory which fadeth not away; when they shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more, neither shall the Sun*

ⁱ John xvii. 24.
^m 2 Tim. iv. 8.

^k 2 Cor. v. 1.
ⁿ Heb. x. 3, 4.

^l Col. iii. 4.

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light on them, or any Heat. For the Lamb which is in the Midst of the Throne, shall lead them to Fountains of living Waters, and feed them with heavenly Manna: And God shall wipe away all Tears from their Eyes; and there shall be no more Death, neither Sorrow, nor Crying, neither shall there be any more Pain; for the former Things shall be passed away°. Nor,

II. Is the Blessing less sure for its being distant and future? There is a Rest, tho' it remains for the People of God. *Paul* was in a Strait, and longed to be gone; but he must wait the appointed Time: Few Saints, comparatively, are soon ripe for Glory; God loves to be trusted; nor is there an Opportunity for the Exercise of many of the Christian Graces in the heavenly World. Faith, Hope and Patience, Benevolence to our Fellow-creatures, and Liberality to the Saints, have their Use and Beauty in the Church militant, Self-denial, Self-judging, and holy Resolutions in the Strength of Christ, to maintain the Conflict with spiritual Enemies, will not be called for in the Church triumphant. We must tarry a while, to be instructed in the useful Lessons of the Vanity of the Creature, the Evil of Sin, our own Inconstancy, and Unworthiness

on the Account of it, before we are admitted to full Victory and Triumph: Nor should the Believer, though detained for a Time, faint, or be weary, indulge Impatience, or Discontent when he thinks of his Apostasy from God, his Forfeiture of Life, Desert of Misery, and that he is employ'd, whilst here, though in a lower Capacity, in the Service of his God, and for the Honour of the Redeemer. The Father does not presently put his Son into the Possession of an Inheritance; but waits till he has Discretion and Prudence to make a right Use of it. The Husbandman waiteth for the precious Fruits of the Earth, and hath long Patience for it, until he receive the early and the latter Rain; and to be over hasty to be gone, bespeaks that we are weary of our Work, or uneasy to suffer; we may sometimes, indeed, with the Psalmist, warrantably wish for *the Wings of a Dove, to flee away and be at Rest*: But our Lord's Resignation should be a Pattern to ours, and teach us to wait the Determination of Providence, and say, *Not as we will, but as thou wilt*. Time hastens with speedy Wings; our Day of Duty and Trial, at longest, is but for a Moment, when compared with Eternity; nor will the Head of the Church be any longer without his Members, or any Part of his Fullness, than is absolutely necessary; and, perhaps, as the worn out Mariner, makes his de-

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desired Port with a peculiar Pleasure, after he has weathered the Storms, and escaped the Rocks and Shelves of a tedious and hazardous Voyage, it may add an exquisite Relish to the Glories of Immortality, to reflect on the Toil and Labour, the Difficulties and Temptations which attended the Saint in a State of Imperfection : And with this View the Apostle,

III. Speaks of it as a most desirable Blessing ; *When that which is perfect is come.*

Universal Nature abhors Pain, flees from every apprehended Evil, and would avoid Trouble. Suffering is not eligible for its own Sake ; and yet, is there a Day passes without some Degree of Grief and Bitterness in the Remembrance of former Grievances, the Sensation of present Calamities, or Fear of future Misery ? Poverty has its Sorrows and painful Cares ; Riches, for their Associates, Fear and Disquietude ; Is there that Pleasure on Earth that has not also its Pain, that Joy which is uninterrupted, or that flourishing Estate that may not as soon be distressed ? How uneasy are we often with our selves ? What gnawing Anxiety for the Good of our Children or Friends ; and who can promise a continual Security from the desolating Judgments of Famine, Pestilence, or War. But admit we are favoured with Health of Body, Peace in our Families, and grow-

growing Prosperity ; though we should pass through the World with full Reputation, respected and unenvied ; which is not to be expected in the present Situation ; yet the horrid Impiety, detestable Abominations, the Blasphemy, Profaneness and Irreligion of the Multitude, and the Miscarriages, Formality and careless Walk of Professors, must be grievous and afflicting, to a Mind born from Heaven : But where there is nothing of this to make us wish for a Removal, the numerous Corruptions which are found in our own Hearts, the Omission of Duties, or the cold and lifeless Manner of discharging them ; the want of Zeal for God, and Love to Christ, that we have Reason to complain of ; the sad Interruptions of our Communion with him, and the slow Proficiency we make in our Likeness to him, are very powerful Arguments to make us long for Perfection : Here the fiery Darts of Satan fly thick round about us ; and how often are we defiled, as well as dejected, by his Influence ; nor can the most watchful, or best furnished Christian, always promise himself a Security from his Treachery, or his Power ; God will indeed, bruise him under his Feet shortly ; but he has never assured him of Success in every particular Conflict ; and when, at any Time, foiled, what Shame and Confusion attends the Recollection ! Under these Circumstances, no
Won-

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Wonder the Saint as weak and helpless in himself, in the Midst of Enemies, liable to a Train of successive Evils, thinks of Perfection with an eager Solitude, and speaks of it as a most desirable Blessing.

And has God reserved, and thus engaged his Faithfulness, to possess his People of perfect and unmixed Blessedness in the upper World? Is there a large and pure Inheritance provided for them; and shall no Enemy be suffered to rob them of it, or alienate their Title to it? How shouldst thou, O my Soul! conscious of Imperfection in the Creature, seriously inquire, Shall this be thine? What is thy Claim? What the Foundation of thy Hope and Expectations? Is the Mercy not worth a Thought? Or wilt thou dismiss it to a more convenient Season? Remember, a Fulness of Misery will be as certainly the Portion of the Ungodly, as a Perfection of Glory will be the Crown of the Saint. Where is thy Heart? it may guide thee to thy Treasure. Will Riches, Honour, or Pleasure, satisfy thee? Is it an Increase of Corn, Wine and Oil, thou art grasping after? these may be had without a Covenant Portion in thy God; but Heaven cannot. Is the Lord of Life and Death, who has the Keys of the invisible World, thy Friend? Or, art thou alienated from him by wicked Works, and determined he shall not reign over thee? Eternal Life is
not

not the mere Fancy of Poets, or the Dream of Enthusiasts; nor described to shew the Orator's Skill, only to amuse and entertain, but a solid Reality, in the Hands of Christ, to give to whom he pleases, revealed in the infallible Oracles of Truth, and only to be enjoy'd by the Believer.

And how should the Saint blush and be ashamed, almost to call any Thing his own, in Comparison of this incorruptible and unfading Inheritance; his Possessions may fail, his Health be impaired, his Peace be destroy'd, and his Life taken from him; but his God, his Redeemer, his Heaven, are Mercies beyond the Reach of the Subtilty or Power of the most designing or rapacious Hands, either of Fraud or Violence. How imprudent to be taken with that which either is not, or is Vanity and Vexation of Spirit! How foolish to be vain, or proud of what may be lost to Morrow! They, and only they, are happy, who have Treasures which neither Moth can corrupt, nor Thieves break through and steal. Under all their present Disadvantages, they are safe in Time, and at length, shall be perfectly blessed, to Eternity.

What that Perfection will be, is beyond the Reach of Imagination to conceive, and the Power of Language fully to describe; but some faint Guesses may be made of it, as it will relate to the Soul and Body of the
glori-

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glorified Believer, or as it respects the Place where he will dwell, the Company with whom he shall converse, the Character he shall bear, the Imployment he shall be engaged in, and the Entertainment he shall be blessed with for ever.

1. As it relates to the Soul, that immaterial and immortal Part of us, capable of Reasoning and Reflection, Choice or Refusal, Happiness or Misery; The three governing Powers of which are, the Understanding, Will and Affections; as to each of which, the Saint shall be perfect.

(1.) In his Understanding: How far this will be enlarged in the other World, is not revealed; but when every Obstruction arising from the indispos'd or distemper'd Organs of the Body, shall be entirely removed, all Clouds of Darkness, and Mists of Ignorance for ever vanish away, and the Soul clear and open to receive Ideas, shall have no Difficulty in Perception, and held close and intense, without Pain, by the Father of Spirits, in the Contemplation of surrounding Objects; we have Reason to conclude, its Capacity will proportionably enlarge with its Imployment.

The Learned need not be told at what Expence of the animal Spirits, and the Fruit of unwearied Application, they obtain the Acquaintance they can at best pretend to, with Things natural, historical, or
divine;

divine; and, after all their painful Searches, how uncertain their Conjectures, how various their Opinions, and how much more yet unknown than what has been discover'd! Those who have spent most Time, and imploy'd the greatest Diligence in the Pursuit of Knowledge, have been free to own, in the Close of Life, that they have gained little more than to know that they *knew but little*; but in the Land of Light and Vision, the plain, humble, though whilst here, illiterate Christian, shall then see as he is seen, and know as he is known. The Croud of pleasing Objects, which every where will present themselves to his View, shall be under a divine Arrangement, without Disorder or Confusion: The Secrets of Nature, the Wonders of Providence, and the Mysteries of Grace, shall each successively entertain and delight him; nor will there be the least Danger of Mistake, or Possibility of Error, no Difficulty in conceiving, nor Hazard of mis-judging; in God's Light they shall see Light, not through a Glass darkly, but immediately, and without an interposing Medium; and, perhaps, the Faculty may increase with the Exercise, and enlarge in its Capacity with its Pleasure. Whether the Knowledge of the Blessed will be in any Degree, or altogether intuitive, or received, as now, in a way of Reasoning and Reflection, is not so easy to deter-

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determine ; but it's highly probable, that in this, as well as in other Respects, they will resemble their glorious Companions, and be like the Angels of God.

(2.) The Will, which, originally, was exactly conformable to the Mind of God, and unhappily received a criminal Bias to Evil, in Consequence of the Fall, will then constantly and invariably follow the Dictates of the enlighten'd Understanding. The highest Glory of the reasonable Creature is, to be obedient to the Sovereign who made him : And as God necessarily, though most freely, wills every Thing that is good ; so his Children shall bear this Part of his Image, and be made like to him in this Respect, as well as others, when they come to Heaven. Here the Judgment is often at a Loss, and the best of Men unstable, inconstant and wavering ; one while the Will seems to be determin'd for God, and the Resolution firmly fixed ; but no sooner does a difficult Duty present it self, or an unexpected Trial face us, or the Enemy at hand, with some alluring Temptation, but we are like the deceitful Bow, soon turning aside, forgetful of our Promises, and over-looking our Obligations, and when to will is present with us, so feeble frequently is the Power, that how to perform that which is good, we know not : This the Apostle acknowledged in his own Case ; and it made him cry out,

O wretched Man that I am ! Who shall deliver me^p ? In Heaven it self, there will be a Work to be done for God ; they who are in his Temple above, and before his Throne, serve him Day and Night ; not with Reluctance and Lassitude, which was their Burden in this World, but with the utmost Freedom and Delight : No Excuses are there sought for, or pleaded ; but uninterrupted and everlasting Homage is as much their Choice as their Duty ; nor can it be otherways ; since,

(3.) Their Affections are as pure as their Will is holy. The fore-mentioned Apostle, perhaps, loved his Master, and his Master's Work, as much as any of his Servants before or since his Incarnation ; he delighted in the Law of his God after the inward Man ; but complains of a *Law in his Members warring against the Law of his Mind, and bringing him into Captivity to the Law of Sin^q*. He could say, he loved his Redeemer, and counted all Things but Loss for the Excellency of the Knowledge of Christ, for whom he had *suffered the Loss of all Things, and did count them but Dung that he might win Christ^r* ; yea, he denounced an Anathema against him who *loves not the Lord Jesus in Sincerity^r* ; and yet, even in this he had not attained, nor

^p Rom. vii. 24. ^q Rom. vii. 22, 23. ^r Phil. iii. 8.
^f 1 Cor. xvi. 22.

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was he perfect, whilst surrounded by so many Objects calling of his Affections, and tempting him to divide some Share among them.

That God may justly claim the Throne in our Hearts, and challenge the Supream in our Affections, will not be disputed by any who believe that he is infinitely amiable in himself, and hath loved them with an everlasting Love; the free Gift of his Son, that amazing Instance of his Regard to his People; the sending the Spirit into their Hearts, to illuminate, convince, and convert them; the frequent Visits of Love he condescends to make in Communion and Fellowship with them; the Promises relating to their present Guidance and Protection, and the Incouragement he has given them to hope for unfading Pleasures at his right Hand in Glory, all conspire to ingage them to love him with all their Hearts, and with all their Soul; but alas! they have too much Occasion for the mournful Complaint, that there is so little Proportion between their Experience and Obligations. In the Day of their Espousals they think they could follow him in a Wilderness, and in a Land unsown; but too soon they discover the glowing Warmth of their Zeal and Affections abate, and that there is too much Occasion for the Charge, that they have left their first Love. How often does the World, in its Profits and
Plea-

Pleasures, take the Place of God? How apt are we to be taken and insnared by the present sensible Objects, and the invisible Realities of Futurity too much slighted or forgotten? How does our Family Concerns, and our Fondness for Relations, engage our Thoughts, and make us loath to leave them; though in cooler or more sedate Reflection, we cannot but judge the Exchange to be every way to our Advantage: But in Heaven our Affections will be wholly spiritual, and unalterably determined on their proper Objects: Which leads us to consider,

The moral Resemblance which the Soul, when made perfect, shall bear to its great Original.

When the Saints are first renewed in the Spirits of their Minds, they *put on the new Man, which, after God, is created in Righteousness and true Holiness*; which is said to be the *Image of him who created them*. As they have bore the Image of the first *Adam*, being shapen in Iniquity, and conceived in Sin, so they are *predestinated to be conformed to the Image of the second Adam*¹. And, after they have been gradually, by frequent delightful Converses with him here on Earth, and spiritual Views of his Glory, changing into his Likeness, from one Degree of it to another, they shall at length be

¹ Ephes. iv. 24. Col. iii. 10.

² Rom. viii. 29.

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fashion'd like him in the Purity, Integrity, and Holiness of his Mind, as well as be made like to his glorious Body. God is infinitely holy; he dwells in a high and holy Place. Angels are pure and spotless Creatures: Nothing that defileth, or is defiled, can possibly enter the new *Jerusalem*; for *without Holiness no Man can see the Lord*: The People of God therefore are sanctified in Part, by the washing of Regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost; they are enabled to see the Beauties of Holiness, the Deformity of Sin, and to press after Perfection; they would be holy even as God is holy; but this will not be their Mercy in Kind, as it never can be in Degree, till Christ their Head, who loved and gave himself for them, shall have fully sanctified them with the washing of Water by the Word, and presents them to himself as a glorious Church, not having Spot or Wrinkle, or any such Thing, holy and unblameable in his Sight: Thus the Spirits of just Men will be made like to the Father of Spirits, not meerly in their natural, or intellectual Powers and Faculties; but especially in that Purity, Goodness and Righteousness, which are the most amiable Attributes of the divine Nature.

How should this serve to comfort the Believer, when mourning over the Imperfection of his Knowledge in this World, he is
often

often grieved that he knows so little of himself, his Redeemer, and spiritual Things; and indeed, at best, his Knowledge, at present, is but like that of a Child under Age; it is his Mercy that he is made wise unto Salvation; but he breathes after farther and more intimate Acquaintance with heavenly Things; and tho' there may be some Room for his complaining of the Weakness of his Capacity, the Darkeness and Confusion of his Understanding, this shall not always be the Case; yet a little while, and the Eye of the Soul shall be clear, enlarg'd and strengthen'd, his Conceptions proper, just and regular, and his Knowledge as abundant as he could wish, no Vail any longer on the Object, or Disorder in the Faculty.

And, how should the sad Experience of the Remains of Sin, the Power of our unruly Passions, the unhappy Reluctance we find to every Thing that is good, and too great an Inclination to that which is evil; how prone our Affections are to wander after forbidden Objects, or to exceed all Bounds, where, if duly moderated, they would be lawful and warrantable, whilst Sin, like a Leprosy, adheres to the Soul, and mixes something of its deadly Poison with all our Thoughts, Desires, Aims and Expectations; How should this make us wish for that World where we shall be pure as God is pure? when the Soul, no longer hinder'd by the Weakness of

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the Flesh, and perfectly deliver'd from the Being, as well as from the Power and Dominion of Sin, shall love, reverence, and serve its God and Sovereign with the utmost Spirituality, Vigour and Delight, shining in his beatific Presence, in all the Beauties of Holiness.

And how may this serve to reconcile the Mind of the Believer to the Determination of Providence, that his Soul must, e'er long, be separated from his Body, and, the Union between those two Companions be dissolved, each remaining in a State of Distance from the other, till the Morning of the Resurrection; since his immortal Part will be well imploy'd, serving God Day and Night in his Temple, and his unimbodied Spirit abundantly replenish'd with the Joys of the celestial Kingdom. Whether this will be immediately upon Death, or in some distant, unknown Period of Futurity, or in the general Resurrection, has been disputed, and shall be particularly consider'd in the following Discourse.





S E R M O N III.

SAINTS compleat in GLORY.



I COR. xiii. 10.

*But when that which is perfect is come,
then that which is in part shall be
done away.*



THE Church of Rome distinguishing between mortal and venial Sin, *that the one, to use their own Words, is remitted by hearty Contrition and Penance; the other by all the Sacraments, devout Prayer, and the like; asserts, That such as die in mortal Sin, go*

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immediately to Hell, and are punished there, with everlasting Destruction; but such as die in venial, or not having fully satisfied for the Punishment due to their mortal Sins, go to Purgatory, till they have made full Satisfaction for them, and then to Heaven^a: This they suppose to be a middle Place, between Heaven and Hell; which, from the Imagination of the Soul's being farther cleansed and purified in it, they call by the Name of *Purgatory*, in which they judge the greatest Part by far of the Saints are placed, and there continue, under some Degrees of Misery and Punishment, till released by the Prayers of the Church, or the Devotions of surviving Friends.

Others have supposed, and particularly some of the ancient Fathers, together with the *Jews*, and some modern Writers, that the Souls of good Men, at Death, enter into *Paradise*, not to suffer, but to enjoy some Degree of Happiness, though not equal to that which they shall be possessed of when re-united to their Bodies; they shall, in the Day of Judgment, be received into the highest Heavens.

Others, especially the *Socinian* Writers, represent the Soul, upon its quitting the Tabernacle of the Body, as *sleeping*, or in a State of Inactivity, without Consciousness,

^a See the Abstract of the *Doway* Catechism, Page 51.

and insensible of Happiness or Misery. They allow, indeed, its Existence, and consent to the Doctrine of future Rewards and Punishments, only referring them to the Decision of the great Day. In Opposition to each of these Sentiments, it's the united Opinion of Protestants, and the reformed Churches, that there is one Place of Bliss and Glory, where the Spirits of just Men, being made perfect, dwell together completely happy, waiting, without Pain, for the full Redemption of the Body; and that there is one Place of Misery, called Hell, or the Lake which burneth with Fire and Brimstone, where the fallen Angels are reserved in Chains under Darkness, to the coming of the great Day, and in which the Souls of the Wicked and Ungodly are tormented with that Worm which dies not, till the Judgment Day, when their Misery will be increased by the Union of Soul and Body, which will be the dreadful Objects of God's Wrath and Indignation for ever.

As to the former of these, I mean the Doctrine of Purgatory, it is,

1. An unscriptural Notion, without the least Foundation in, or Warrant from the Word of God.

Some, indeed, of their Writers have mentioned a Passage or two in the Old Testament, as looking this Way; but the modern Disputants lay the whole Stress of the Argument

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gument on two or three Places in the New Testament; the one is that of our Lord, *Matt. xii. 32.* where speaking of the Remission of Sins, he says, *There is one which will not be forgiven in this World, nor in the World to come:* Whence they conclude some Sins are forgiven in the next World, and that this implies a Purgatory; for there only is Remission of Sins, and not in Hell or Heaven ^b. Another Passage they mention is, *1 Cor. iii. 15.* where they suppose the Apostle speaks of some under the Guilt of Sin, *who shall be saved, yet so as by Fire;* and the other, which they think fully proves it, is that of *Peter*, first Epistle, *Ch. iii. 18, 19.* where speaking of our Lord, he says, *He was quicken'd by the Spirit, by which also he went and preached to the Spirits in Prison.*

As to the former of these Scriptures, it is certain, that our Lord is speaking of the Sin against the Holy Ghost, as absolutely and eternally unpardonable; and the *Hebrew* Phrase, of not being forgiven in this World, nor in that which is to come^c; only more strongly and vehemently asserts, that it shall be punished, not only as it was in the Destruction of the *Jews*, their City and

^b See the above-mentioned Catechism, *Ibid.*

^c Notum est ex Hebræis usitatissimâ *μεμνηται*, hujusmodi Negationes in contraria maxime affirmare: Itaque non remittetur idem fuerit, atque certo & absque ulla Venia punietur tum in præsentī Vita tum in futura. Vide *Beza* in loc.

Temple, in this World, but in their enduring also the Wrath of God for ever in the World to come ; nor is there in this Text the least Countenance given to the Supposition of a middle Place, where Sin, at all, and much less this against the Holy Ghost, shall be forgiven ; and whatever wild Imaginations some of the weaker Fathers may have run into, it is certain those who were of sounder Judgments among them, agree with us in this Interpretation of it. Thus *Fulgentius*^d, treating professedly of the Forgiveness of Sin, says, That “ our Lord and Saviour, by this Phrase, does not intend, that any Sins which were not pardoned in this World, will be forgiven in the next ; but shews, to Men of Understanding, that those Sins, and no other, will be forgiven ” ; or rather, as he might have said, appear to be forgiven “ in the next World, which were forgiven in the only and true Catholick Church in this World ”.

We readily allow, that about the Time of our Lord's Incarnation, and somewhat before, it was the Opinion of many of the *Jews*, that every one of the Children of

^d Hoc Verbo, Dominus & Salvator noster non aliqua Peccata in futuro seculo dimittenda, quæ in hoc seculo dimissa non fuerint, sed bene intelligentibus ostendit, non alia, sed illa tantum in futuro seculo dimittenda, quæ in hoc seculo, in una & vera Ecclesia Catholica fuerint unicuique dimissa. *Fulgent.* in Lib. de peccat. remiss. I. c. 24.

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Abraham, after the Flesh, who continued in the Profession of Judaism, would, sooner or later, be saved; and when the greater Evils, or more abominable Practices of some of them were objected to this Opinion, the Account they gave of it was, that all Sins committed against the preceptive Part of the Law, were passed by upon a mere Repentance; all such as were committed against the Prohibitions of it, were forgiven, either in the great Day of Expiation, or by the Afflictions of this Life, especially if they ended in Death, or however, after Death, either more immediately, or after some length of Time^c. Agreeable to which Notion some have thought our Lord to speak in this Place; not in the least patronizing the Opinion, which has no Foundation either in Reason or Revelation, but that he might be more easily understood, and more fully declare the divine Resentment against this Sort of Blasphemy. However, let the determinate Meaning of the Place be what it will, there is not the least Intimation given of Forgiveness obtain'd, either by the enduring of Punishment, or by the good Works and Prayer of the Devout in this World.

As to the second Scripture quoted by them, it is evident, to every unprejudiced

^c Vid. *Hieruf.* Sanhed. Fol. 37, 38.

Reader, that the Apostle is speaking of some Teachers, or Ministers of the Gospel, who, with the rest of the Saints, holding the Head, and adhering to Christ the great Foundation, might however be in Danger through Ignorance, or from the Temptation of Profit or Reputation, to build Wood, Hay and Stubble, or Doctrines foreign to, and, in some Measure, inconsistent with the Foundation; whose Works being contrary to the Will of God, should be burnt up, destroy'd, or come to nothing; though their Persons escaped with apparent Danger, much Hazard and Difficulty: In which, perhaps, he alludes to the Prophets Phrase, of *a Brand plucked, or saved, out of the Burning*^f. As the whole Description is Figurative or Metaphorical, and he speaks of himself as the Master-Builder, as laying the Foundation, and mentions Gold, Silver, and precious Stone, Wood, Hay, and Stubble; which can have no literal Meaning: So the Fire, by which every Man's Works shall be tried and made manifest, must certainly be understood as descriptive either of those various Ways which Providence takes to convince Men of their Errors in this World, or that full Revelation which will be made of Truth in the great Day, when every Man will know how far his Sentiments or

^f Zech. iii. 2.

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Doctrines were agreeable or contrary to it : And that this cannot be the imaginary material Fire of Purgatory, is evident ; because it will try the Works of all, whether good or evil ; whereas the Papists confine its purifying Power to venial Sins.

As to the other Place mentioned by them in *Peter*, it is evident, that the Spirits, said to be in Prison, were the Spirits of those who, formerly, were disobedient, and who abused the Long-suffering of God in the Days of *Noah* ; to these Christ once applied, by his Spirit, in the Ministry of that Preacher of Righteousness ; and when they had grieved and affronted his Spirit, he determined he should no longer externally strive with them, and, in his Vengeance, swept them away by the Flood ; *Noah* and his Family being miraculously delivered. And though many have formed a Notion of a *Limbus Patrum*, or a Place of Confinement, for the Old Testament Saints, as there is not the least Colour for it in other Parts of Scripture, so the Term *Prison*, seems to confine the Sense of this Text to the before-mention'd Disobedient ; and whereas the Papists themselves are at a Loss to determine the Success of Christ's preaching to these Spirits in Prison, or how far it prevailed to their Deliverance ; we may safely conclude, that as this World, and the Time of Life is the only State of Probation, so as the Tree falls
it

it lies; nor can the Devotions of surviving Relatives, or the Prayers of the Church, bring a wicked *Dives* out of Misery, or procure him the least Drop of Water to cool his Tongue, any more than the Malice of Hell and Earth bring a holy *Lazarus* out of *Abraham's* Bosom. We never read but of two Places for departed Spirits; and our Lord tells us, that there is a great Gulf fixed between them; nor is there any passing from the one to the other^s.

And whereas the whole Foundation of this supposed Purgatory lies in the Distinction of mortal and venial Sins, it will be necessary to observe, Sins may be distinguished from each other, as more or less heinous in their Nature, and aggravating in their Guilt; yet all Sin consider'd objectively is infinitely evil; and the Apostle says expressly, that *the Wages of Sin is Death*; where he is not speaking of this or the other Iniquity, but of Sin abstractedly, as it is a Violation of the righteous Law of God, and an Injury to his manifestative Glory; and the Curse is equally directed against all, *who continue not in all Things which are written in the Book of the Law to do them*ⁿ. And the Apostle *James* declares, he that *offends but in one Point is guilty of all*ⁱ; and the Instance he mentions, is that of an unbecom-

^s Luke xvi. 26.

ⁿ Gal. iii. 10.

ⁱ James ii. 10.

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ing Respect to Persons. And our Lord declares, that *of every idle Word*, which the Papists rank among the most venial Sins, *Men shall give an Account in the Day of Judgment*; and adds as a Reason, *for by thy Words thou shalt be justified, and by thy Words thou shalt be condemned*^k. Nor is it disputed by Bellarmine himself, that many of the learned of their own Church are displeased with, and deny the Distinction. But the Absurdity of this Opinion will farther appear,

2. As it is a manifest Reflection on the Love, Merit, Power and Faithfulness of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The strongest Instance of the Redeemer's Affection for his People, that we can possibly conceive of, is contained in that gracious Declaration, *as the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you*^l; that is, with an infinite and unchangeable Love. Now if the Father would not leave the Soul of his Son in a separate State, nor suffer his Body to see Corruption, can we think it consistent with the Redeemer's affectionate Regards to his People, that after all the Toil and Labour, the Trials and Afflictions, the Sorrows and Temptations they have met with in this World, he should suffer them to be confined in a Place of Darkness and Misery. If this

^k Matt. xii. 36, 37.

^l John xv. 9.

were the Case, it must surely arise from some Defect in their Title to the Inheritance prepared for them, and would be a standing Reproach on the Merit of Christ's Blood, and the Value of his Satisfaction, which is the Ground and Foundation of it; but we are assured they have Redemption through his Blood, the Forgiveness of their Sins, according to the Riches of his Grace; that they are justified from all Things, from which they could not be justified by the Law of *Moses*; that there is now no Condemnation to them, nor can any lay any Thing to their Charge; since he has died, is risen again, and ever lives to make Intercession for them; he bore their Sins in his own Body on the Tree; died the Just for the Unjust, that he might bring them to God, that is, to the Vision and Injoyment of him, having purged away their Sins by the Sacrifice of himself; he hath by one Offering for ever perfected them who are sanctified; insomuch that God declares, he has *blotted out their Transgressions, and their Sins and Iniquities will he remember no more.* Now if the Blood of Christ cleanseth from all Sin, and they are washed from their Sins in the Blood of the Lamb, What Objection should remain against their immediate Admission into his glorious Presence? If it is said, they are not thoroughly cleansed from all Unrighteousness, it must be because he

either would not, or could not make them clean; the former is highly injurious to his Love; the latter is little less than Blasphemy to his Power; he who made the World by his almighty Will, and upholds it by the Word of his Power, can, with ease create in us a clean Heart, and renew a right Spirit within us; he is stronger than the strong Man armed, and is as thoroughly furnished to be the Author, as he is to be the Finisher of our Faith.

Farther, it is equally inconsistent with his Truth and Faithfulness: It is the Glory of Christ that he is a faithful Witness, and he has expressly told his Disciples, *In my Father's House are many Mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you: I go to prepare a Place for you. And if I go and prepare a Place for you, I will come again and receive you unto my self, that where I am, there ye may be also*^m. Now if the Report be either false or partial, it must be charged upon him as a Violation of that Integrity which is essential to him as the God of Truth, and will be always found with him as the great Prophet of the Church; nor can we conclude, that he who was sent to reveal the Will of the Father to us, and by whose Gospel Life and Immortality are brought more clearly to light, would have

^m John xiv. 2, 3.

been silent on this Head, had there been the least Foundation for it.

So that the Doctrine of Purgatory is not more unscriptural than inconsistent with the Love of the Redeemer's Heart, the Merit of his Sacrifice, the Power of his Arm, and his Faithfulness to his Promises.

3. It is a most mercenary, selfish, and carnal Notion, visibly calculated to impose on the Weak and Credulous, and enrich the Priesthood; for besides their exempting all who have enter'd into a Vow of Chastity and canonical Obedience, that is, the Priests, they leave out of this deplorable Case all who have enter'd into a Vow of Poverty, that is, such as have parted with their All to the Church, and by whom nothing farther is to be gained; Nor can it easily be conceived, how Men of tollerable Sense and Learning, should give into, and strenuously maintain so ridiculous an Opinion; but from the daily Experience of the great Advantage arising from it to themselves, who take Care to be well paid for every Mass and Prayer for the Dead. Our Lord has told us, that he hath the Keys of Hell and of Death; he opens, and no Man shutteth; but in this, as in other Respects, they have criminally attempted to wrest the Power out of his Hands, and divide it among themselves.

As to the Doctrine of Paradise, as distinct from Heaven, though countenanced by *Philo*

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The Jew, Ireneus, Tertullian, and others among the Ancients, and borrowed from them by Dr. *Whitby*, of late, I can see no other Foundation for it, than the Mistake of the Word Paradise, as it is used in the New Testament; a Term manifestly used by the *Jews* to signify the Injoyment of God in a State of Happiness; it is however to be observed, that the Account they give us of it, is vastly different from the *Romish* Purgatory, as they describe it to be a Place of Purity and Bliss, though not equal in Degree to what the Saints shall enjoy when they come to Heaven. As to the Phrase of being received into *Abraham's Bosom*, it is evidently taken from the Custom of the Eastern Countries, and the Manner of their sitting together at Entertainments, and intends no more than sitting down with *Abraham, Isaac* and *Jacob* in the Kingdom of God. And when the Thief upon the Cross pray'd, *Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy Kingdom*, and had the Promise from a dying Saviour, *this Day shalt thou be with me in Paradise*ⁿ; we cannot justly suppose, that he meant any other than the Kingdom of Heaven, and that our Lord's Reply assured to him an immediate Admission into it. When the Apostle says, *that he was caught up into Paradise, and heard unspeakable*

ⁿ Luke xxii. 42, 43.

Words,

Words, he explains it himself by *being caught up to the third Heavens* °; beyond which we are never told of any other Place, where God manifests his Glory, and where his People are to dwell. So that we dare not be wise above what is written, but conclude with the Apostle, that when the Soul is absent from the Body, it is present with the Lord.

Nor can we find any Reason from the Word of God, to think as many have done, that the Soul of the Believer, when separate from the Body, remains senseless, asleep, or unconscious, without Imployment or Entertainment: For, as it is highly probable that some Degree of Thought or Reflection, is an essential Property of the rational and immortal Part; so the Account we have of the Inhabitants of Heaven, is, that they *are before the Throne of God, serving him Day and Night in his Temple. They fall down before him that sat on the Throne, and worship him, who liveth for ever and ever, casting their Crowns before his Throne, saying, Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive Glory, Honour and Power* p. It is readily granted, that the Bodies of the Saints are, as it were, asleep, or resting in the Graves; they sleep in the Dust; and thus Man lieth down and riseth not, till the Heavens be no more. And

° 1 Cor. xii. 2, 3.

p. Rev. iv. 10, 11. Chap. vii. 15.

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thus when our Lord says, *Lazarus sleepeth*, he explains it by saying, *Lazarus is dead*⁹; and this, very consistently with their entering into Peace, and walking in their Uprightness, according to the Prophet's Description of the Death of the Righteous, his Body rests as in a Bed, his Soul enters into Peace; which supposes a Capacity for the actual Possession of it: Whether the Apostle, when caught up into the third Heavens, was in or out of the Body, it's equally to our Purpose; for he *heard* unspeakable Words; so that whether he was in a Transe, or separated for a short Time, from the Body, it's certain his Soul was conscious and actively employ'd. And when our Lord says to the Thief, as before mention'd, *This Day shalt thou be with me in Paradise*, he could by no Means be understood by him, as referring to the Day of the Resurrection; but that, within the Space of that Day, he should be admitted to the Work of Heaven, and behold the Glories of the invisible State. And we must think the Apostle, when he says, *I am in a Strait betwixt two, having a Desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better*¹; to be either criminally weary of his Work, and impatient of Suffering, or to assign a most weak and foolish Reason for this his Solitude: Can it ever

⁹ John xi. 11, 14.

¹ Phil. i. 23.

be thought, a Man who had so much Zeal for God, so much Love to the Redeemer, and Delight in being serviceable in his Hand to the Souls of Men, could speak of being in a Strait, or under the least Difficulty to determine which was most eligible to be preaching the Gospel, displaying the Glories of his Lord, promoting his Cause and Interest in the World; or in a State of absolute Insensibility, where he should neither do, nor enjoy any Thing. But he takes it for granted, when he quitted the Tabernacle of the Body, he should be with Christ; which he declares to be far better: What! better to be asleep, without Thought, in a State next to that of Annihilation, than to enjoy the Delights of Communion and Fellowship with Christ, in his secret Retirements and publick Ministrations! How unworthy would it be of him, for whom to live was Christ? Nor does he merely suppose for himself, as a peculiar Favourite of Heaven, that he might escape this horrid State of Neutrality and Indifference, and be admitted to the Presence of his Saviour; but speaks of it with an Air of Resolution and Certainty, as the common Assurance of God's People, *We know that when the earthly House of this Tabernacle is dissolved, we have a Building of God, an House not made with Hands, eternal in the Heavens:* What, a Building to lie empty! an House uninhabited

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ted till the last Day, Mansions in our Father's House unoccupied ! Surely, had this been the Case, he had little Reason to add, *We are confident, and willing rather to be absent from the Body, and to be present with the Lord* ^c. To say that we are present with him only as the inanimate Parts of the Creation are under his Eye, and upheld by his Power, not to say that this seems most contrary to the very Notion of Spirits, but must be conceived, if there is any Foundation for it, to be inflicted as a Degree of Punishment ; Now Justice it self has no Demand ; nor can the Holiness of God find the least Fault with the Soul of a Believer compleatly justified, and perfectly sanctified ; nor can there be any Meaning in the Parable of *Dives* and *Lazarus*, if we are not to think of the one as in a State of positive Happiness, as well as of the other in the Experience of Misery ; and the very Request of the rich Man, that *Lazarus* might be sent to administer some Relief, is intirely inconsistent with the Notion of Soul sleeping. Besides, our Lord represents their Condition as unalterably fixed ; nor does he give the least Intimation of any farther State of Service or Joy reserved for *Lazarus*, now supposed to be sleeping, and insensible.

^c 2 Cor. v. 1—8.

We

We know that some Passages of Scripture speak of the Reward of the Saints, as reserved for them to the Day of Judgment; and the Apostle particularly mentions his *Crown of Righteousness, which the Lord the righteous Judge should give him in that Day*: But this relates to the Completion, and not to the Introduction of their Felicity; every one who obtains the Victory, and overcomes by the Blood of the Lamb, has his Crown and his Palm given him upon his first Entrance into the new *Jerusalem*; but there may be some Reserves of Glory, some additional Beauties shed on him when he comes in the last Day to receive his Body, and make up a Part of the shining Retinue of his exalted Saviour and Judge.

If it be farther inquired, When the Soul is made thus perfect, since the Blessing is not to be found on Earth, and without it there is no Admission to Heaven? We answer, The same Stroke that breaks the Union between Soul and Body, removes at once all Defilement from the immortal Part, and the Work of Sanctification is then finished in Righteousness. It will not be disputed, but this is easy with Omnipotence, and, from what Judgment we can form of departing Saints, as the greatest Part of them, by far, have made some Complaint of themselves to

* 2 Tim. iv. 8.

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the very last ; and others have been under the violent Assaults of Satan, who has raged the more, because he saw his Time was short ; we can hardly think that they were wholly free from Imperfection whilst here : And the Scripture having positively assured us, that nothing that defiles shall ever enter into Heaven, it is most reasonable to conclude, that the Moment they are discharged from their Warfare, and when they come to the End of their Race, they are at once fully prepared for the Joys of an everlasting Triumph.

And as Angels are represented as so many ministring Spirits, sent forth to attend the Heirs of Salvation, and our Lord speaks of the Soul of *Lazarus* as convey'd by them into *Abraham's Bosom* ; it has generally been assigned to them as their Province, to receive the Spirit when dislodged, and carrying it through the Territories of the Prince of the Power of the Air, to introduce it into the Presence of the King of Glory, and dispose of it among the Spirits of just Men made perfect, who are before the Throne of God, and of the Lamb, for ever and ever.

And from this Specimen we have now had of the Doctrine of *Rome*, we may form some Judgment of the Errors of that Church, and the Mercy of a Deliverance from their Tyranny, Superstition, and Idolatry : Time was when *England* paid Thousands yearly
to

to that See for Indulgencies, Absolutions and Prayers for the Dead. And as stupid and ridiculous as the Doctrine of Purgatory may appear to us now, it was once the received Opinion of our Fore-fathers: And if God for our Iniquities, and Abuse of Privileges, should yet again give us up to Blindness of Eyes and Hardness of Heart, our Consciences and Purfes may lie at the Mercy of those blind Guides, whose Religion is Pagentry, and whose Aim is Spoil. I cannot help here observing, that the Door at which Popery seems to be likely to enter among us, is not only the Profaneness and Impiety of the Multitude, but especially the Contempt with which all experimental Godliness is treated by professed Deists, who are bantering and ridiculing every Thing that is sacred, and exalting the Powers of human Nature, in direct Opposition to Scripture and Experience. And it is to be lamented, how far some who profess to be Preachers of the Gospel, as to the Doctrine of Merit, run into the Camp of the Adversary, whilst it may easily be shown, that the best Antidote against the spreading Poison of Popish Errors, is a spiritual Knowledge of the Nature, Necessity, Reality and Perfection of Christ's Satisfaction; nor can I see any Man so likely to give into the Sacrifice of the Mass, as he who believes himself, and teaches others, that the Sacrifice of our
Lord

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Lord Jesus Christ was merely figurative and metaphorical.

And how comfortable is the Reflection to a Believer, that when absent from the Body, a Body that he is sometimes loth to leave, he shall be immediately present with the Lord! This, though upon other Accounts, he might wish to stay, when in a right Frame, will make him say with the Apostle, I am rather willing to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better than the best Situation in this World; here the Soul is at best incumber'd with the Body, which, as a dead Weight, keeps it down, and hinders it in its Desire after, Contemplation of, and Communion with God, and as a Snare and Burden often makes a Saint cry out, *O wretched Man that I am!* But when unclothed, it shall ascend as a bright Flame of Zeal and Affection, to the Father of Spirits, its Original and Portion; no more any uneasy Sensations attending it from the acute Pain of bodily Distempers, no more Disorders from fainting Spirits, or languishing Nature, but for ever strong and vigorous in the Exercise of every heavenly Grace; its Attention shall no more be called off by the Returns of Hunger and Thirst, by the Cares of Life, or a Concern to maintain the tottering Tabernacle; who would not wish to die for such an Immortality?

And

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And how dreadful is the Case of the Wicked, when the short Span of Life is measured, and their few remaining Sands run out, the Summons will come, Give an Account of thy Stewardship this Night, this Day, this Hour, or this Moment, thy Soul is required at thy Hands ; no more any State of Trial, nor any possible Release from the Chains of everlasting Darkness ; no Prayers of Friends are either required, or can reach their Case, no Drop of Water to cool their Tongue, or the least Abatement, or Cessation of Misery ; but dying Christless, they drop into Hell, that Lake which burns with Fire and Brimstone.





S E R M O N IV.

SAINTS compleat in GLORY.

I COR. xiii. 10.

*But when that which is perfect is come,
then that which is in part shall be
done away.*



WE have seen how the Soul of the departed Saint will be glorious on its Separation from the Body, we are now to take a View of the material Part, that frail and dying Part, which will, e'er long, be laid in the Grave, to awake out of the Dust in the Morning of the Resurrection.

And

And here we must consider the Tabernacle as taken down at the divine Command, as under the Care of Christ, whilst in its silent Repository, and as called forth by him to be cloathed with Beauties, and fashion'd like unto his own glorious Body. The Wicked are cut off in God's Anger, like the leprous House, often thrown down with Violence, and always with Execration. But not a Circumstance in the Death of the Saints but is determined by infinite Love, and unerring Wisdom, as well as awful Sovereignty: For,

i. Death cannot seize the Believer but with Leave from Heaven; and as he lives the Charge of Providence, so he dies beloved of God. When the Lord has compleated his Designs of Grace upon him and by him, he signs his Discharge; and Death, how formidable soever in his Approach, is the sure Friend of the Redeemed of the Lord, the Messenger sent to bring them to their Father's House, to possess the Kingdom he has prepared for them. The Death of the Ungodly, is Part of the Wages of Sin, and brings a Curse along with it; but blessed are the Dead who die in the Lord; for neither Life nor Death can separate them from the Love of God which is in Christ Jesus.

God has various Ways to call home his faithful Servants; sometimes they are snatch-
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64 *Saints compleat in Glory.*

ed away with a seeming Precipitance, when a Deluge of Evil is breaking out upon a Nation ; and now and then they may fall in a publick Calamity, sometimes in the Field, and sometimes at the Stake, some by pining Sickness and wasting Infirmities, others by sudden Disorders, least thought of and expected. But he who has fixed the Bounds of their Habitations, and appointed the Number of their Months, always, in the fittest Season, collects his Jewels, and makes their Death a Blessing to them : Nor can any Thing dissolve the Relation between the Head and the Members, their Bodies being Temples of the Holy Ghost, and allied to him, who, as the Children, partook of Flesh and Blood, himself also, in like Manner, took Part of the same, continue related to him when stretched out cold and lifeless. The Soul upon the Breach of its Union with the Body, has no anxious Cares for its former Companion ; and the very Dust of the Saints is precious in the Eyes of the Lord, so precious, that,

2. He has his Eyes ever upon it, nor will he suffer one Particle to be lost. The many Changes under which it passes, whilst subject to Corruption, and mouldering in the Grave, are all within the View, and under the Cognizance of him, who will one Day command the Sea and the Earth to give up their Dead ; and though it is as foolish as it is impious, for us to search the Tombs for

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Relicks of the Dead, as if they could be of any service in Seasons of Distress or Danger; yet we may rest assured, where-ever his *Fulness* is, it is always under his Care, nor will he lose any one Part of it: In vain then does the cruel Persecutor, or the superstitious Bigot, bring out the Bones of Martyrs, or Confessors, and express their Resentment against them by committing them to the Flames, whilst it is beyond the Power of any Creature to annihilate the least Part of Matter; and their Ashes, how distantly soever scattered, shall all be preserved as the Foundation of those glorious Bodies, which, with exquisite Skill, shall be made fit for the Service and Enjoyment of God; for,

That the Body will be raised, how ridiculous soever it might seem even to the Wiser among the Heathens, is not only highly reasonable in it self, but clearly and fully revealed in the Word of God. *Job* is very express concerning himself; *I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter Day on the Earth. And though after my Skin Worms destroy this Body, yet in my Flesh shall I see God: Whom I shall see for my self, and mine Eyes shall behold, and not another, though my Reins be consumed within me*^a. And *Daniel* speaking of those who are sleeping in the Dust of the Earth,

^a Job xix. 25, 26, 27.

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says, *that many*, that is, a large Host, which no Man can reckon up, *shall awake some to everlasting Life, and some to Shame and everlasting Contempt*^b. And in the New Testament, Martha speaks of it as what she was thoroughly persuaded of; *I know that my Brother shall arise again in the Resurrection of the last Day*^c. And the Apostle is very large in explaining, as well as clear and full in asserting this Doctrine, in the 15th Chapter of the first Epistle to the Corinthians, from the 12th Verse to the End of the Chapter.

Sometimes this Work is ascribed to the Father; thus of him it is said, *he raises the Dead, and quickens them*^d; and sometimes to the Son, who is represented as one *who shall change our vile Bodies according to his mighty Power, whereby he is able to subdue all Things to himself*^e; and sometimes to the Holy Ghost; for the Apostle says, that the mortal Bodies of the Saints shall be quicken'd *by the Spirit that dwelleth in them*^f: Nor is there any Inconsistency in this, since the eternal Three are one in Operation, as well as in Nature and Glory.

As to the Time when the Bodies of the Saints will be raised, we are forbid the Inquiry; since the Secret is lock'd up in the divine Mind, no Man, no, not the Angels

^b Dan. xii. 2.

^c John xi. 24.

^d John v. 21.

^e Phil. iii. 21.

^f Rom. viii. 11.

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of God, nor the Son of Man himself, as Man, knows the Day, or Hour, as our Lord himself observes, but the Father only^s; and there is a visible Reason for the Concealment of it; that we might always be upon our Watch, and waiting for his coming.

Many other Inquiries have been made as to the Place where the Resurrection shall be, and whether the same numerical and individual Body shall be raised, and whether the Resurrection shall be confined to the Saints, and the Bodies of the Wicked be annihilated, or remain in a State of Corruption; Questions not so immediately before us. Let it suffice to observe, that inasmuch as the Wicked are scoffingly saying, Where is the Promise of his Coming? That the Time is hastening on, when the Lord of Life and Glory, the great *Immanuel*, shall descend from Heaven, accompanied by Millions of Angels, and all his Saints; when the Trump of God shall sound, and the Dead come out of their Graves; and shall hear the Voice of the Son of God; and hearing they shall live, arise again, and appear before him; and whilst the Wicked shall be covered with Shame, and cloathed with Confusion, the very Bodies of the Saints shall appear bright and glorious: For in that Day,

^s Mark xiii. 32.

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1. They will be perfectly free from all the Blemishes, Defects, Infirmities, or Deformities, which attend them in this World.

They will no more be subject to Sickness, Pain, Hunger, Thirst or Weariness, Inconveniences, which often make the Saint complain whilst here: Nor is the most comely, beauteous Person on Earth, to be compared with the Redeemed of the Lord, when raised without Spot, Blemish, Wrinkle, or any such Thing; and what adds to the Consideration is, that it is a Beauty which shall not fade, but remain compleat and perfect, through the successive Ages of Eternity.

The Children of God, in common with the rest of Mankind, are sometimes exposed to the barbarous Insults of those who inhumanly make themselves merry with the natural or accidental Deformities of their Fellow-creatures; *Paul* himself speaks, *how through the Infirmary of the Flesh, he preached the Gospel to the Galatians*; and mentions it to their Honour, that the *Temptation which was in his Flesh they despised not, nor rejected*^h; plainly intimating, that this had been the Case in other Places; and we find some false Teachers in the Church of *Corinth*, objected against him, that *his bodily Presence was weak, and his Speech contemptible*ⁱ; but nothing of this will be found

^h Gal. iv. 13, 14.

ⁱ 2 Cor. x. 10.

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with the Saint in the great Day; when it is highly reasonable to conclude, that a Perfection of Beauty will adorn him, Beauty far surpassing that of our first Parents in Paradise. Here the Body is perpetually exposed to innumerable Accidents from without, and frequently subject to many internal Disorders; a Want of Exercise endangers Health, by feeding and promoting grosser Humours; and there is no Attendance to it, without some Degree of Weariness. How much Time is spent in providing for the returning Calls of Appetite; and a little Excess in its Indulgence, is as dangerous to the Constitution as dishonourable to our Benefactor. In a Word, how much of our Time is taken up in answering those Questions, of, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be cloathed? With what Care and Application do we prop up the tottering Tabernacle; and after all we find, that in Time, it will dissolve, and must be taken down; and the most that can be said of our Life at present, is, that it is a Succession of Hunger and Thirst, Pain and Sickness, Toil and Weariness, whilst the Body is continually exposed to the Inclemency of Air and Seasons; one while pinched with cutting Cold, and presently fainting under the Weight of sultry Heat, till at length its Strength impairs, its Beauty fails, and it drops cold and uncom-

70 Saints compleat in Glory.

ly into the Grave. But oh! with what Transports of Joy will the Soul of the Believer meet its former Companion in the last Day! when there will be no Part wanting, nothing superfluous; when he shall be no more troubled with the Cravings of Hunger, or the Disquietude of Thirst; nor complain with *Jonah*, of the scorching Heat of the Sun; but whilst the Saviour will be shedding every Kind of Beauty upon him, all Things that surround him shall concur to compleat and perpetuate his Felicity.

2. The Body of a Saint, when called out of the Grave, will be immortal and incorruptible: *It is sown in Corruption, but it is raised in Incorruption; for the Dead shall be raised incorruptible, and this Corruptible will put on Incorruption, and this Mortal Immortality^k.*

A Man can hardly take any tolerable Notice of himself, but he must observe, that the Seeds of Death are found within him; nor is there a Person in the World, how distinguished soever for Health or Strength, but will sooner or later add to the Trophies of this universal Conqueror; we may say with *Job*, *to Corruption, Thou art our Father; and to the Worm, Thou art our Sister^l*: God will bring each of us to Death, and to the Grave, the House appointed for

^k 1 Cor. xv. 42. — 52, 53.

^l Job xvii. 14.

all living; the Time is hastening on; when God will change our Countenances, and send us away, and the Question must be resolved into an universal Negative; What Man is he who liveth and shall not see Death? since it is appointed to all Men once to die, and after Death the Judgment. There may be a Difference as to Time and Circumstances; *one dying in his full Strength, being wholly at ease and quiet: When his Breasts are full of Milk, and his Bones moistened with Marrow. Another dying in the Bitterness of his Soul, never eating with Pleasure; but in this they all agree, they lie down alike in the Dust together, and the Worms shall cover them^m: But in Heaven, as there will be no more Pain, nor Crying, so there shall be no more Death. Death is the last Enemy; and when he is swallowed up of Victory, there will be a sufficient Foundation for the triumphant Inquiry; O Death, where is thy Sting? O Grave, where is thy Victory? Then the Body, as well as the Soul, will be immortal; not in the same Sense in which God is so, who only hath Immortality and eternal Life; nor exactly in the same Manner as Angels, or even the Soul its Companion; for the Body will still remain distinct from the Mind, and be incorruptible, not so much in it self, as though it were indivisible, and absolutely in-*

^m Job xxi. 23, 24, 25, 26.

72 Saints compleat in Glory.

capable of all Impair or Alteration, but from the Appointment and Constitution of God, who will preserve it by his almighty Power in a State of Existence and Perfection,

It is something Shocking to us, even in our utmost Vigour and Strength, to consider that one Part of us must be reduced to Dust, and lie scattered in the Bowels of the Earth, for, perhaps, many Generations; nor can any Thing so easily conciliate our Mind to the Determination of our heavenly Father, in this Respect, as the Remembrance, that when once the Soul shall be reunited to the Body, it will be no more unclothed to the endless Ages of Eternity.

3. The Bodies of the Saints will be raised pure and holy, guiltless and accepted, without inherent Pollution or imputed Guilt.

Many and various are the Opinions of Divines about the Manner of propagating Corruption, or contracting Defilement; and, perhaps, it may be true in the most strict, abstracted, or philosophical Sense, that meer Matter is incapable of sinning; yet it is certain, it may be objectively a Temptation to it, and the Occasion of it, as well as it is frequently the Instrument, and always the Associate of the Soul in the Commission of it. It is observable therefore, that the Apostle, in the Citation he brings to confirm what he had before asserted, that *both Jews and Gen-*

Gentiles are all under Sin, does not only take Notice of the Darknes of the Understanding, and the Obstinacy of the Will; that *there is none that understandeth, none that seeketh after God*; but adds, *their Throat is an open Sepulchre; with their Tongues they have used Deceit; the Poison of Asps is under their Lips; their Mouth is full of Cursing and Bitterness; their Feet are swift to shed Blood*ⁿ: And elsewhere he speaks of the Members of the Body, as yielded in a State of Unregeneracy, as *Servants to Uncleaness and to Iniquity*^o; and even after Conversion he complains, that he saw a Law in his Members warring against the Law of his Mind, and bringing him into Captivity to the Law of Sin, which made him groan out that heavy Complaint, *O wretched Man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the Body of this Death*^p? And the Apostle James singling out the Tongue among the Members, observes, that where the Man is unsanctified, *it is a Fire, a World of Iniquity, that it defileth the whole Body, and setteth on Fire the Course of Nature, and is set on Fire of Hell; that it is an unruly Evil, full of deadly Poison*^q: Nor have we the least Reason to imagine, that the Soul only is intended, when the Apostle concludes all under Guilt. Companions and Associates are cognizable by the

ⁿ Rom. iii. 11, 13, 14, 15.
vii. 23, 24.

^q James iii. 6, 8.

^o Chap. vi. 19.

^p Chap.

74 *Saints compleat in Glory.*

Law in capital Cases ; whilst the Bond of Union remains unbroke between Soul and Body, the Law considers them as Parties, denounces the Curse against the whole Person of him who continues not in all Things written in the Book of the Law, to do them ; accordingly the Punishment of Sin is not only represented by the gnawing of a guilty Conscience, or the Worm that dieth not ; but also by the grievous Torments of the Body, in the Lake which burns with Fire and Brimstone.

There never was but one of the Sons of Men, since the first *Adam's* Apostasy, who was perfectly holy in his Nature and Conversation, harmless, and without Defilement, and separate from Sinners ; that holy Thing which was miraculously conceived and born of the Virgin, was untainted, free from the Pollution of Sin, as well as for ever secured from the Power and Dominion of it : And whereas the Redeemer, in his amazing Condescension, took the same Flesh and Blood in kind, though without the Poison of Sin which is found with his Brethren, and so the Head and the Members are of one common Nature ; so the Time is coming on when their raised Bodies shall resemble his glorious Body in Purity and Innocence, as well as in Dignity and Glory. What is said of those who have a Part in the first Resurrection, holds good of every particular

Saints compleat in Glory. 75

ticular Believer, both in Body and Soul, that when he comes to Heaven, he will appear to be *blessed and holy*^r: Nor can it be otherwise; for *without Holiness no Man shall see the Lord*; nothing that defiles, or is defiled, can ever enter into the new *Jerusalem*. And as there will be no Object from without, to move or excite those disorderly Passions and corrupt Inclinations, which are almost interwoven with our Nature in a State of Imperfection; so, were they present under all the Disguises and Alurements with which they appear to us in this World, the Believer being perfectly sanctified in Soul, in Spirit, and in Body, would feel no more, the least Emotion towards them, or Affection for them.

4. The Bodies of the Saints when raised, will be spiritual, active, and vigorous; not as we have before observed, that they will cease to be material, or, that they will be changed into the same Substance with the Soul; for the Body will still be a true and proper Body, having all the essential Parts and Properties of it, but for ever delivered from those more gross, heavy, and earthly Qualities which attend it whilst here: Thus the Apostle says, *It is sown a natural Body, it is raised a spiritual Body; it is sown in Weakness, it is raised in Power*^r.

^r Rev. xx. 6.

^r 1 Cor. xv. 43, 44.

76 Saints compleat in Glory.

What our Lord in Compassion said of his Disciples, *The Spirit is willing, but the Flesh is weak*^t, is, in a Degree, true of the most active Servants in his Household ; How do the Disorders of the Body frequently indispose for the Worship of God ? What Interruptions from Weariness, Sickness, Pain, or Drowsiness ? How does the intemperate Glow of Youth, or the sickly Langour of declining Years, call off our Attention from heavenly Things ? This, no Doubt, was one Reason of the Apostle's Wish to be gone, heighten'd, perhaps, if we give into the Opinion of many, by the Weakness and Tenderneſs of his natural Constitution. A few Hours in the Sanctuary, when the Mind is intense, and thoroughly employ'd, will bring Weariness to the Flesh ; and if the Exercise is carried on but a little too far, what a Loss of spiritual Appetite, what a Pall upon our Relish ? But they who are in the Temple of the living God above, serve him Day and Night with renewed Vigour, and enlarged Delight ; here the animal Spirits are subject to Decay, and are quickly spent and exhausted ; but there, when Millions of Ages are run out, they will be equally ready to their Work, and pleased with their Entertainment, as the very first Moment they entered upon it ; the natural

^t Matt, xxvi. 41,

Saints compleat in Glory. 77

Sun will, one Day, cease to shine ; nor will the Moon, or the Stars always give their Light ; but the Saint will never cease to love, worship and enjoy.

How far like the Body of Christ in its Ascension, at the Direction of the Soul, they may be capable of moving from one Place to another, like a Ray of Light, or the Flight of an Eagle, is not for us to determine ; but this we may depend upon, that in this, as well as in other Respects, as far as Beings compounded of Flesh and Spirit are capable, they will be like the Angels of God : Which leads me,

Lastly, To observe ; The Bodies of the Saints, when raised, or in raising, shall be fashioned like unto Christ's glorious Body ^u.

This is a Circumstance that could never have enter'd into the Heart of Man, had not God been pleased to reveal it unto us by his Spirit ; of this the Apostle speaks, when he says, *As we have born the Image of the Earthly, we shall also bear the Image of the Heavenly* ^x. And the Apostle *John* does not only speak of the Privilege it self, but seems to give us some little Hint as to the Manner in which we shall be Partakers of it, when he says, *Beloved, now are we the Sons of God ; but it does not yet appear what we shall be : But we know, when he shall appear we*

^u Phil. iii. 21.

^x 1 Cor. xv. 49.

78 *Saints compleat in Glory.*

shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is : So that whilst we behold, with Wonder and Gratitude, what God hath bestowed on his Children already, that they are now taken into his Family, adopted to an Inheritance, made Heirs of himself, and Joint-Heirs with his Son ; it may yet be affirmed, that it does not appear what they shall be : But this we know, that one Day they shall be like him, and be satisfied with that Likeness ; and, perhaps, the Mercy may be given or enlarged in a Way of Vision, whilst the Saint looks with Amazement on the incomparable Beauty, and dazzling Lustre of his exalted Saviour, he may be changed into his Likeness, from Glory to Glory : We have it from the Lips of the Judge himself, that in that Day the Righteous shall shine forth as the Sun in the Kingdom of their Father, as the Sun of Righteousness will arise and shine upon them in his full Strength and unclouded Glory for ever ; so each of them, like a Star, borrowing his Splendor from this Fountain of Light, shall bear some Resemblance to him, though in all Things he is to have the Preheminence ; and it is worth our Notice, that so rare and exquisite will the Beauty of the Saints be in Heaven, that it is represented as the Produce of a skilful Artist, who is to *fashion* our

1 John iii. 2.

vile

Saints compleat in Glory. 79

vile Bodies like to his own glorious Body ; and in this he will imploy the same Omnipotence as that by which he subdues all Things to himself.

How grand and magnificent is the Description which *Daniel* gives of the Person whom he saw in Vision ; *Then I lift up mine Eyes, says he, and looked, and behold, a certain Man cloathed in Linen, whose Loins were girded with fine Gold of Uphaz ; his Body also was like the Beryl, and his Face as the Appearance of Lightning, and his Eyes as Lamps of Fire, and his Arms and his Feet like in Colour to polish'd Brass, and the Voice of his Words like the Voice of a Multitude^a ; and in Language equally majestic. The Apostle John tells us, that in the Midst of the seven Candlesticks, he saw one like unto the Son of Man, cloathed with a Garment down to the Foot, and girt about the Paps with a golden Girdle. His Head and his Hairs were white like Wooll, as white as Snow ; and his Eyes were as a Flame of Fire ; and his Feet like unto fine Brass, as if they burned in a Furnace ; and his Voice as the Sound of many Waters ; and his Countenance as the Sun shining in its Strength^a. The Vision had the same Effect on each of these Servants of God ; they fell at Christ's Feet as dead, unable to bear up under the Pressure of his effulgent Glory,*

^a Dan. x. 5, 6.

^a Rev. i. 13, 14, 15, 16.

80 Saints compleat in Glory.

till he laid his Hand upon them, and strengthen'd them to receive those farther Communications, which he design'd to make known to his Church by them : And thus the three favourite Disciples, who were distinguished with a View of a transfigured Jesus ; when they saw *his Face*, that it *shone as the Sun*, and *his Raiment was white as the Light*, so white, that no Fuller on Earth could white it ; they fell on their Faces and were sore afraid ^b.

But the Vision of the Redeemer's Face in Glory, will be attended with perfect Love, which casteth out all uneasy Fears, the Saints will cast their Crowns, indeed, at his Feet, and worship him with the utmost Reverence ; but as the King's Son beholds the Majesty of his Father, in the Day of his Coronation, with very different Sentiments from a Rebel or a Traitor ; so the Church, the Spouse of Christ, when made meet for heavenly Communion with him, will stand for ever ravished in his Presence, looking, loving, and changing into his Likeness ; as *Moses* brought down some of the bright Rays which surrounded him in the Mount to the Camp of *Israel*, and the People could not behold him till he had put on a Vail ^c ; so we have Reason to believe, that there would be no conversing with *Enoch* or

^b Matt. xvii. 1, 2.

^c Exod. xxxiv. 35.

Saints compleat in Glory. 81

Elias, so glorious are their very Bodies, were they to come down from Heaven, array'd in their bright and shining Robes, and to tabernacle among us. And let it be remember'd, that the Saints are not only to resemble Christ in that Purity and spotless Integrity which was found with him in a State of Humiliation, or be made meerly like to that Body of his, which he had on Earth, and which we must suppose to be exceedingly comely, till it was marred with Sufferings; but the Promise is, that we shall be fashion'd like unto Christ's *glorious* Body, which is at the Right-hand of God, and most highly exalted; so that we see, as the Head is without Blemish, incorruptible, holy, spiritual and glorious, so will the Members be in their Proportion; and it will add to the Mercy, that they have it from him as their Saviour, and in him as their Pattern.

How foolish then is the Conduct of the Men of Dress and Fashion, who spend more Time in their Choice of, or adjusting their Apparel, than in a Concern to be cloathed with the Robes of Immortality; cease thy Pains, mistaken Man, about that which is transitory and perishing, and be earnest with God, that thou mayst not be found uncloathed in the Day of his Son's appearing.

And if there are any so provokingly wicked, as to affront the Maker, by mocking

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his

82 Saints compleat in Glory.

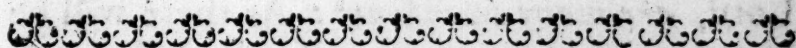
his Workmanship, making the outward Blemishes, or natural Deformities of their Fellow-creatures, or Fellow-professors, the Subject of their Ridicule, whilst they have Reason to tremble, to think how they shall answer it another Day; let the Saint, who is the Subject of their profane Banter, rest satisfied, since he has *such* a Body, at present, as his heavenly Father judges best for him; and how much soever it may be attended with, or sown in Dishonour, it shall be raised compleat in Glory.

And are the Bodies of the Saints laid down at the Command, and secured by the Care of Christ in the Grave! What a comforting Consideration is this to the pious Mourner! especially when he has Reason to sorrow as one who has Hope; perhaps a longer Continuance of a near Relation, or a dear Friend, might be very desirable, and whilst we ought to be affected with the Hand of God, and our own Loss, in their Removal, let us however leave immoderate Grief to those who have no Hope of meeting again; we are following them as fast as the Wings of Time can carry us; and the Promise runs, *Behold, I come quickly*; and should not the Believer, who has his Conversation in Heaven, join the Church in saying, *Amen, even so come Lord Jesus.*



S E R M O N V.

SAINTS compleat in GLORY.



I COR. xiii. 10.

*But when that which is perfect is come,
then that which is in part shall be
done away.*



Having given you some Account
of Perfection, as it will be
found in the Soul and Body of
the Saints, when they have done
with Earth, and enter into
Heaven, and shall meet their
Saviour at the last Day. We proceed,
To consider it in its Relation to the Place
where they shall dwell for ever : And,

84 Saints compleat in Glory.

1. The new *Jerusalem* will be large and capacious, sufficient to receive and entertain the whole Election of the Father's Grace; or all who are redeemed by the Son's Blood, and sanctified by his holy Spirit; as no one of these will be wanting in the Day when Christ makes up his Jewels; for all that the Father hath given him shall come unto him, and to them, who are enabled to hear his Voice, and come unto him, he gives eternal Life, with an Assurance that they shall never perish; so there will be Room enough for them all; *In my Father's House*, says our Lord, *are many Mansions*^a: As there will be many gather'd out of every Kindred, Tongue, and Nation, besides the Thousands that are sealed in the Tribes of *Israel*, so there will be a Mansion for every one of them; for the weak and trembling Babes, who are subject to Doubting, and prone to Unbelief; as well as for *Abraham*, who was strong in Faith, giving Glory to God, and enabled to hope against Hope: For the Poor and Distressed, the Despised and Contemned, who are rich in Faith, and precious in the Eyes of the Lord, as well as for those who have been wealthy, great and honourable in the World.

Here the Saints are scatter'd all over the Earth, here and there one, like a Diamond

^a John xiv. 2.

Saints compleat in Glory. 85

in the Quarry; and if associated together, it is at best but into smaller Assemblies or Societies; nor is there any one Place of Worship sufficient to contain them all, but in Heaven every one shall have his Seat; for our Lord's Prayer runs, *Father, I will that they also*, that is, each, and every individual, who either are living, or shall be so, through all the future Ages of Time, that all those *whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, to behold my Glory*^b.

We have no need to pursue the Inquiry, whether an Apostle, or a Martyr, may have the highest Seat, or principal Place? since the Ingagement is, that all shall be with Christ, beholding his Glory, and jointly employ'd in the Work of Praise. Thousands, yea, ten Thousand Times ten Thousand have been taken up thither already; and still we may say of the Church triumphant, as our Lord did of the Church militant; *And yet there is Room*, Room to entertain all whose Names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life.

2. It is represented as a Place prepared for the Saints, by infinite Wisdom, and boundless Love; *I go*, says Christ, *to prepare a Place for you*; not only as our elder Brother, to take Possession of it in our Name, and hold it for our Use; but as our

^b John xvii. 24.

86 *Saints compleat in Glory.*

Fore-runner, to refit it for our Reception; not that we are to imagine the heavenly Palace has lost the least Degree of its Beauty and Lustre with which it was originally adorn'd, when God erected his Pavillion there from the Beginning; there is no Dust or Decay, but its high arch'd Roofs are as resplendent as in the first Moment of its Production; no Rust or Canker shall ever reach those pure Crowns of Gold which are worn by its Inhabitants; and yet may it not be very consistent with the Father's Regard for his Son, and the Son's Love to his People, that when the risen Saviour was exalted at his right Hand, he might, like Princes in the Day of their Inauguration or Investiture, scatter some new Beauties around the Place, and give out some fresh Treasures from his inexhaustible Fulness. This however is certain, our Lord would not have made Use of it as an Argument of Consolation to his sorrowing Disciples, had it been a Term without Meaning, or of which they could form no manner of Conception.

That the Saint must be prepared for Heaven, and be made meet, by the sanctifying Influences of the Holy Spirit, for his Inheritance may be easily accounted for, and will be readily acknowledged by every one who has any tolerable Acquaintance with the Purity of God, and the Plague of his own Heart; but who could ever have expected

Saints compleat in Glory. 87

pected to have heard of Heaven prepared for the Saints; perhaps it may, in some Degree intend, that all shall be in Order, no Hurry or Confusion, as is usual when a Guest surprizes us at unawares, every Thing in Heaven will be ready at Hand, and thoroughly prepared. Without the least Ruffle or Discomposure in the Saint himself, or his Companions, he shall be conducted to that Place, or that Part of the Kingdom which was designed for him from before the Foundation of the World.

3. It will be a Land of Vision, eminently enlighten'd with the Glory of God, and of the Lamb.

What seems primarily to refer to the Glory of the Church in the latter Day, when the Knowledge of the Lord shall cover the Earth, as the Waters do the Seas, may, with equal Propriety, be consider'd as a Prediction of that World of Light in which the Believer, in God's Light shall see Light; then the *Sun shall be no more his Light by Day, neither for Brightness shall the Moon give Light unto him; but the Lord shall be to him an everlasting Light, and his God his Glory. His Sun shall no more go down, neither shall the Moon withdraw her self; for the Lord shall be his everlasting Light, and the Days of his Mourning shall be ended*^c.

^c Isa. lx. 19, 20.

88 Saints compleat in Glory.

John tells us of the City which he saw in Vision, that it *had no Need of the Sun, nor of the Moon to shine in it; for the Glory of the Lord did lighten it, and the Lamb is the Light thereof. And there shall be no Night there, and they need no Candle, neither Light of the Sun; for the Lord God giveth them Light^a.*

It is the Observation of the wise Man, confirmed by universal Experience, that *truly the Light is sweet, and a pleasant Thing it is to behold the Sun^c.* And when God is giving us an Account of the Happiness reserved for his in Heaven, he says; *Light is sown for the Righteous, and Gladness for the Upright of Heart^f;* and was this wanting, we could form no Ideas of Joy or Pleasure; every one will own, that it is the most afflictive Providence to be deprived of Sight; but the blind Man, like *Bartimeus* of old, has the most lively Sense of his own Case, and with him is ready to cry out, with the utmost Importunity, *Lord, that I might receive my Sight.*

The melancholy Periphrasis that we have of Hell, is, that it is a Place of utter Darkness; and what a desolate, vast Wilderness would this World be without the Light, as well as the Heat of the Sun; which, though enjoy'd with great Disproportion in different

^a Rev. xxi. 23. and Chap. xxii. 5.

^f Psal. xcvi. 11.

^c Eccles. xi. 7.

Saints *compleat* in Glory. 89

Places, and always attended with a Succession of Night, gives an Opportunity to make Provision for our selves and Families, and perform the several Offices of Life: Now what Sort of Light, think you, will that be, that shall even eclipse the Sun it self; where there will be no Night, but a clear, delightful, and eternal Day?

4. It is represented as a Place of Rest, or the Believer's Home; where he will be treated as a Son at full Age.

The Sanctuary, when filled with God's Presence, is a Place of sweet Refreshment to a renewed Mind: A Day in God's Court, when he manifests his Love, is better than a Thousand elsewhere; he prefers the meanest Post, and would rather be a Door-keeper in the House of the Lord, than to possess the Tents of Sin and Iniquity. But, as the Apostle observes concerning the Church, before the Coming of our Lord, that it was like a Child in its Nonage, differing little from a Servant, and under Tutors and Governors, till the Time appointed; so it is true in a Degree of those Saints who dwell most with God, and under the Smiles of his Countenance whilst here; that they are, as it were, at School, advancing from one Class to another; and though sometimes they may say of an Ordinance, or a Duty, that it is made to them as the Gates of Heaven, and the Entrance of eternal Life; yet
the

90 *Saints compleat in Glory.*

the most they enjoy whilst here, is but as the Earnest and First-Fruits of the Inheritance reserved for them; and as they are assured, for their Comfort, that there remains a Rest for them; so they will, e'er long, be taken home to their Father's House, where they will be treated with the greatest Freedom and Familiarity, as Heirs of God, and joint Heirs with Christ: And as there will be no Possibility, through Weakness or Temptation, of abusing their Patrimony, so it will be then given out in the largest Measure, and not in that sparing, gradual Way which the Wisdom of God sees best for them whilst here; and the heavenly World will have the Advantage of every other Place, as it will furnish out new Delights continually, so as that its Inhabitants shall never be weary of it; which, how soon it is the Case with the most beautiful Palaces, pleasant Parks, or well disposed Gardens, is too well known to the dissatisfied Proprietor, though not so easily conceived of by the envying Spectator; we are seldom here long pleased with a Place; in the Hurries of the City, how apt are we to wish for a Country Retreat, and as soon uneasy with the Solitude of Retirement: But, as it is said of the Blessed in Heaven, that they shall go out no more; so there will not be the least Desire, Wish, or Inclination to it found with any of them for ever.

And

Saints compleat in Glory. 91

And how should this support the Saints, especially such of them who are poor in this World, under the Thoughts of their meaner Accommodations by the Way : You may not have, indeed, the gilded Roofs of Princes, nor the rich and costly Attire of the Great and Noble ; there may be no Room for you at their Tables, or in their Houses, but as you have a God to go to now, his Throne to apply to in every Time of Need ; so the Redeemer is gone to prepare you Mansions in your Father's House above. Who would be uneasy with the meanest Cottage, and the homely Apparel of the poorest Peasant, when he knows it is but for a Day, or Month, or Year ; a little Time, at longest, and then he shall exchange it for a royal Palace and the costly Robes of Princes, if you can think of Heaven as *yours*, your Home and resting Place ! How much Reason to be content with such Things as you have by the Way, since, in the End you shall enter that World of Vision, large enough to receive the whole Household of Faith ! Which leads us,

To consider Perfection as it respects the Company into which the glorified Saints will be admitted, and with whom they will associate for ever.

What the Apostle observes of the Saints under the Gospel Dispensation, that they *are come unto Mount Sion, and to the City of the living*

living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable Company of Angels, and to the general Assembly, and Church of the First-born, which are written in Heaven, and to God, the Judge of all, and to the Spirits of just Men made perfect, and to Jesus, the Mediator of the new Covenantⁿ, may serve as a List, to inform us who will be their Companions in the other World; God, the Judge of all, will smile on them as reconciled in his Son, in whom he is just, whilst he is their Justifier. Jesus, the Mediator of the new Covenant, will receive and present their Praises to his Father, and communicate to them constant Supplies of Light and everlasting Joy. Besides these, there will be an innumerable Company of Angels, wise and holy, as well as happy Creatures; and the general Assembly of the First-born made up of the Spirits of just Men, until the Morning of the Resurrection, and after that Day, in their compleat Persons, who will be for ever with each other, and with the Lord.

Nothing employs the Thoughts of a wise Man more than the Choice of a Friend, to whom he may, with Safety, impart his Secrets, and, with Freedom, unbosom his Soul; and when he is happily directed in the Determination, How does he prize the Blessing! But there is such a Variety of Cir-

ⁿ Heb. xii. 22, 23, 24.

cumstances which must unite to render a Companion suitable; so much Treachery and Inconstancy found with human Nature, that there is always an Allay, and some Mixture of Bitterness with the apprehended Sweets of earthly Friendship; but in Heaven the Believer may be always free, because he is ever safe: And the following Circumstances concur to evince the Perfection of Society there.

(1.) There will be an exact Agreement in Judgment, and the utmost Harmony in Affection.

The former is, perhaps, impossible, whilst our Capacities, Situation and Advantages are so exceedingly different, and the latter too little attended to, even by those who profess to be Followers of the lovely and loving Jesus. It is not necessary to suppose, that the Capacity should be equal in all, or that no one of the Saints in Glory will know more than others; it is sufficient, that nothing necessary to their Duty or Happiness will be concealed from them; and that, as far as they are acquainted with divine Mysteries, they will agree in Judgment; nor will there be any more angry Debates about things almost indifferent, and of little Importance, which have generally created the most bitter Quarrels among Professors on Earth; for then they shall see Eye to Eye, and Face to Face, and know even as they also are known.

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It was our Lord's Commandment, and recommended upon new Motives, that his Followers should love one another; *As I have loved you, so ought you also to love one another*; then are ye my Disciples if ye love one another¹: And the Apostle having observed, that the Saints, though many of themselves, yet are one Body in Christ, and Members one of another, exhorts, that *Love should be without Dissimulation, and that we should be kindly affectioned one towards another, with brotherly Love*^k: And to the same Purpose the Apostle Peter speaks of an *unfeigned Love for the Brethren*; and that *we ought to love each other with a pure Heart, fervently*^l. And, very much to the Honour of the primitive Church, we read, that the Multitude of them that believed were of one Heart, and of one Soul: but alas! How far is that divine Principle either lost, or greatly abated? witness the sad Divisions and fierce Contentions of those who are yet agreed in Things of the last Moment and Consequence, professing to worship one God, to trust in the same Redeemer, and to hope for the Guidance of the same unerring Spirit; but in the peaceful Realms of Glory there will be no Difference in Opinion, nor cooling of Affection; all will unite in the same common Work, with Hearts full of

¹ John xiii. 34, 35.

^k Rom. xii. 5—9, 10.

^l 1 Pet. i. 22.

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Love to him that sits on the Throne, and to the Lamb; and immovably attached to each other as bearing his Image, and being the Workmanship of his Hands.

(2.) As a Spirit of Love will run through the whole Assembly, so no one will envy or repine at the Happiness of another.

It may seem surprizing to some who are not thoroughly acquainted with human Nature, that there should be any Strife or Debate in the little Family of our Lord, made up of those who had left all to follow him, who were told of nothing, but Trouble and Persecution in this World, which of them should be accounted the greatest; and we find, that the Ten, when they heard of the imprudent Request *James* and *John*, the Sons of *Zebedee*, with their Mother, made, that one might sit on his right Hand, and another on his left, in his Kingdom, they were moved with Indignation against the two Brethren; nor could easily brook so much as the Thought of their Superiority or Advancement^m: And how had the Patriarch's Fondness for his Son, on *Joseph's* relating but a Dream, had not Providence interposed, been the Occasion of his falling a Sacrifice to the Envy of his Brethren. Though a good Man must be sensible when in a proper Frame, that the Gifts of Grace and Comfort are so-

^m Mark x. 35—41.

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vereignly dispensed by him who divides to every Man as he will, and that the least Degree of them is more than we can claim or deserve; yet, how is he sometimes tempted, even before he is aware, to think it hard of God that others should so much exceed him; and it is well if he is free from every Spark of Envy, as to the Person thus distinguished. But in Heaven every one will have a Fulness which will satisfy him; and, next to their own Felicity, they will be pleased and delighted with that of their Companions. Angels will not envy the Saints, their being joint Heirs with Christ, and made like unto him; nor will it give them the least Uneasiness to observe, that their Robes washed, and made white in the Blood of the Lamb, out-shine those of their own natural Purity and Innocence; nor will the Saints find any Disquietude in the Thought, that the Powers and Capacities of the angelic Host, are more large and extensive than their own; each shall possess his own Blessedness unenvied, uninterrupted for ever.

(3.) There will be no Objects to excite our Pity or Resentment; which will ever be the Case whilst here, in a World of Misery, Sin and Folly.

How painful is the Solitude of a godly Parent for the Welfare of his rebellious Child! with what Heart aking, and bleeding Anguish, does he see the approaching Storm

Storm of divine Vengeance ready to overtake him, and the melancholy Reflection on the deplorable Circumstances of his Case, is too ready sometimes to tempt him to forget the Mercy of his own. Nor can the good Man hear the Blasphemy, Oaths and Imprecations of the Wicked, without a generous Pity and Compassion; and if they are Proof against his Warnings and Admonitions, his Soul will mourn in secret Places for them: Thus *Lot's* righteous Soul was vexed at the filthy Conversation of the Wicked.

To this also we may add the great Variety of most pitious and compassionate Cases which continually surround us; the Poverty of some, the Sickness of others, and the sudden Loss of Reputation, and falling from the Heights of Honour to the lowest Depths of Disgrace. Not to mention the numberless Accidents which our dearest Friends, and nearest Relatives are constantly exposed to, which justly engage the tender Sentiments of Pity and Sympathy: And if you add to this, that we either have, or think we have, frequent Cause to be angry at the Unkindness of Friends, the Disobedience of Children, the Negligence of Servants, or the Treachery of Enemies; How different a Place must Heaven be to this World? where all will be holy and happy; no one Thing ever said or done, that can possibly displease or create Uneasiness; where we shall have

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none sick or in Prison to visit, or poor to relieve, none to reprove or mourn over for ever.

(4.) There will be a delightful Inter-course maintained between Saints and Angels, and one Saint with another, attended with the utmost Pleasure and Improvement.

It is highly probable, that Angels, those Sons of the Morning, who sang together at the Creation of our World, and who are the secret Ministers of God in executing many Parts of his Providence, will lead the wondering Saint to a more clear Perception of the Displays of the divine Wisdom and Power, in spreading the Heavens as a Curtain, and laying the Foundations of the Earth; and when we shall be out of Danger of paying Worship but where it is due, they may point out the particular Instances of their Guardianship, Guidance or Assistance; whilst the Saint will be telling over the Wonders of electing and redeeming Love, and recollecting the many Dangers he escaped, the many Trials and Difficulties which attended him, how all worked together for his Good by the Way, and worked out for him a far more exceeding and eternal Weight of Glory in the End.

And besides this, I apprehend there will be a Communion of Saints with Saints in Glory. Some, indeed, have doubted, whether Parents will know their Children, Ministers their People, Friends, who have ta-
ken

ken sweet Counsel together, each other, in the Morning of the Resurrection: And we readily grant, that our Knowledge of, and Love to one another in Heaven, will be very different from what it is whilst here, when the principal Foundation of the one, will be our common Relation to God as our Father; and the other will be without the least Mixture of Sin and Defilement: But hence we are by no Means to conclude, that we shall be wholly ignorant of one another; nor can I think, that the commendable Satisfaction which we have in the Good of our Friends and Families at present, will be wholly lost hereafter. It is certain the Disciples knew our Lord when transfigured before them; and the Apostle speaks of the believing *Thessalonians*, as his *Hope, Joy, and Crown of Rejoicing in the Presence of our Lord Jesus Christ, at his coming*^a: Nor is it improbable, that Ministers will then be told, when there will be no Danger of Pride or Vanity, how far they were made useful in the Hands of the Spirit, to the Souls of Men, whilst here. Can we think that God would deprive a religious Parent of the Joy of knowing his Children, the dear Parts of himself, to be happy as well as he, unless there was some weighty and important Reason for it; and if it should be suggested, that the Know-

^a 1 Theff. ii. 19.

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ledge of the Miscarrying of some, who, as Vessels of Wrath, are shut up in Hell, might render them uneasy: It may be reply'd, That they will be more taken up with the Thoughts of God's Glory, than in any Regard to the Creature, and will then see, that it was absolutely necessary and proper, all Circumstances consider'd, that God should glorify himself in the Destruction of his Enemies; as they will join the Judge in the Sentence, though directed against those who have been near and dear to them in this World, when Assessors with him in the last Day; so they will for ever acquiesce in it, as most just, equal, and righteous: So that we may safely conclude, that they who are often speaking one to another in their holy Conferences here on Earth, will remember each other, and with Joy and Gratitude, call over their former Experiences. So that it will be sufficient to render the Society of Heaven, perfectly agreeable and eternally delightful to be in the Presence of God, near the glorious Person of the Redeemer, to be Companions for Angels, and the Spirits of just Men made perfect; this will be the Mercy of the Redeemed of the Lord.

Which is a full Proof that the Unrighteous shall not inherit the Kingdom of God: What would the Unsanctified do for suitable Company, or agreeable Conversation in that World of perfect Purity? There is no foolish

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foolish Talking, filthy Jestings, no Licentiousness or Profaneness in that City of God; so that could we suppose their Entrance into it, they could have neither Pleasure nor Employment; here the Sabbath is a Weariness, and there it will be an eternal Sabbath; here they cannot away with the Service of God, an Hour or two in a Week; whereas, in his Temple above, he is served Day and Night without Interruption, or Cessation; so that it is not more awful in the Thought than it will be certain in the Event, that unholy Souls shall be confined to an unclean Place, and be Companions for impure Spirits for ever.

And how should the Consideration of that Union in Affection, which will prevail in the whole Assembly above, fill the Saints with Shame and Confusion, that they fall so vastly short of it in this World. To betray, or give up any fundamental or precious Truth of the Gospel into the Hands of the Enemy, is not Charity, but Cowardice or Treachery. To rest easy whilst our Friends or Families entertain the most dangerous or destructive Errors, is not Love, but Cruelty, and the worst Sort of Cruelty too, as the immortal Part is concerned: Nor are we to break in upon plain, positive Institutions, or to change the goings in or out of Christ's House, in Compliance with the best,

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the wisest, and the most learned of Men ; here, if we are called to separate, we must do it as under the Eye of the King of the Church, the Lord of Conscience ; but in lesser Matters, and especially such as are not expressly revealed, our Difference of Opinion should, by no Means, be attended with an Alienation of Affection ; and if it is true, as some have asserted, that no two Christians differ about Things, so many and important as they are agreed in, How should they, laying aside all Strife, Contentions, evil Surmisings, and unbecoming Animosities, treat one another like Children of the same Father going to one Home, to dwell together for ever. Pity, great Pity, that Brethren should fall out by the Way, when they shall, they must agree in the End.

And since there will be a perpetual Converse maintained between the Blessed in Glory, why should the Saints be so shy of each other, so unwilling to communicate their Experiences to one another whilst here? the Language of the Wicked bewrays them ; and how do they herd together in Clubs or Societies, where they may have an Opportunity, with the greater Freedom, to converse together about their beloved Iniquities? And our daily Observation, how irksome religious Discourse is to the Ungodly,

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godly, should engage us to invite, with *David*, all that fear the Lord, to come and hear what he hath done for our Souls: Thus will you begin the Work of Heaven in your Way to it, and be more prepared for spiritual Converse with Angels and glorified Saints.





SERMON VI.

SAINTS compleat in GLORY.



I COR. xiii. 10.

*But when that which is perfect is come,
then that which is in part shall be
done away.*



Whatever may be the Judgment of the World, it is not more true, that the Righteous is more excellent, than that he is more blessed than his ungodly Neighbour: He is not without his Troubles, and expects, through much Tribulation, to enter into the Kingdom; but his inward Pleasures, holy Peace, and

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and humble Joy, distinguish him from, and raise him above the most Prosperous of the Wicked; he has more solid Contentment, a better Relish of his Enjoyments, and a more sweet Composure of Mind than can be found with the Ungodly, tho' among the Great and Noble, who are continually harrassed with their guilty Fears, and terrible Forebodings of future Punishments. But if he has the Advantage in Time, when so many Things seem to make against him; how much more will this be the Case, when he shall appear before God in Glory; when every Faculty of the Soul shall be perfectly pure, and greatly enlarged; when his Body shall resemble the glorious Body of his exalted Head; when Heaven shall be his Home and resting Place, and Angels, with his fellow Saints, be his delightful Companions for ever? How far Perfection will attend each of these, has been, in a Measure, consider'd already. We go on,

To consider it as it relates to their Character, which, whilst on Earth, is imperfect, and at best, but mixed and compounded; for the most that can be said of them whilst here, is, that they are truly humble, serious and conscientious, though not to that Degree as they ought, or wish to be.

Through the Ignorance of some, the Malice of others, and the Envy of many, they are subject to Aspersions and Reproach; but the

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the Day is coming, when every Tongue that rises against them shall be put to silence, and condemned ; nor shall their Names be mention'd, but with the utmost Honour and Renown. Not that we are to imagine,

I. That it will be pleaded by themselves, or by others in their Behalf, in the great Day, that they were wholly innocent, and altogether guiltless, as if they had lived without Sin whilst on Earth ; for the Apostle is exprefs, that we have all sinned, and come short of the Glory of God ; in the strictest Meaning of the Phrase, *There is none Righteous, no, not one* ; not a just Man upon Earth, who does Good and sins not : If we say we have no Sin, we deceive our selves, and the Truth is not in us. Now, in that Day in which the Secrets of all Flesh will be made manifest, the Believer will be acquitted ; not as one who has never offended, and against whom the Charge is wrongfully laid ; for it will be allowed by himself, as well as found upon Record, in the Book of Omniscience, that in many Things, he has grievously transgressed. It's observable therefore, when the Angel of the Covenant says, Take away the filthy Garments from the Church, as represented by *Jeshua* the High Priest ; it supposes her being cloathed with them ; and that, from meer Grace, the Declaration is given out, *Behold, I have caused thine Iniquity to pass from thee, and I will cloath*

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cloath thee with change of Raiment^a: So that the whole World being concluded under Guilt, in this Respect, the Mouths of the Saints, as well as Sinners, must be stopped before God.

2. Where they have been falsely accused by Satan, wicked Men, or their angry mistaken Brethren, they shall be fully and abundantly vindicated.

Satan is called, *The Accuser of the Brethren*, and is said, *to accuse them before God Day and Night*^b. This he does by charging them with Hypocrisy and Dissimulation, magnifying every Weakness, aggravating every Offence, and lessening and depreciating what of Good is found with them, or done by them; an Instance of this we have in the Case of *Job*, in which there is an equal Mixture of Malice and Impiety; for after God had said of him, *That he was a perfect and an upright Man, one that feared God, and eschewed Evil*: Satan insolently replies; *Doth Job fear God for nought? Hast thou not made an Hedge about him, and about his House, and about all that he hath on every side? Thou hast blessed all the Works of his Hands, and his Substance is increased in the Land. But put forth thine Hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy Face*^c. And after the good Man

^a Zech. iii. 3, 4.

^b Rev. xii. 10.

^c Job i. 8, 9, 10, 11.

had

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had weathered the Storm of the most shocking Dispensations, in the Loss of his Family and Substance, with an heroick Intrepidity, and invincible Patience, he dares to move the Lord against him a second Time: *Put forth thine Hand now, and touch his Bone and his Flesh, and he will curse thee to thy Face*^d. And in the fore-mentioned Representation of the Church, by *Joshua* the High Priest, Satan appears standing at the right Hand of the Angel of the Covenant to resist him; and the Phrase of, *The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan, even the Lord who hath chosen Jerusalem, rebuke thee*, plainly intimates, his Business there was to produce Charges, and forward Impeachments.

And the Apostle *Peter*, recommending to the Saints a proper Concern in the Strength of Christ, do maintain a good Conscience, mentions this as the Reason, that there was some *who spoke evil of them as evil Doers*, who might hereby be brought to Shame for their *false Accusations of their good Conversation in Christ*^e. And our Lord tells his Followers, That as they are not of the World, the World will hate them; and that they were to look for Revilings and Persecutions; and that *all Manner of Evil would be said of them falsely for his sake*^f: Nor can they well expect it should be other-

^d Job ii. 5.

^e 1 Pet. ii. 12.

^f Matt. v. 11.

wife, since *the Disciple is not above his Master, nor the Servant above his Lord: It is enough for the Disciple that he be as his Master, and the Servant as his Lord: If they have called the Master of the House Beelzebub, how much more shall they call those of his Household*^e. Thus, How many false Stories were raised? and with how much Zeal and Diligence propagated, of the Christians, during the first ten fiery Persecutions? when they could not but be sensible, that their own Cruelty drove the Saints into secret Places, for the Celebration of religious Worship; how industriously did they charge them with Adultery, Fornication, Incest, Murder, and every other Abomination! though, in their publick Apologies, they appealed to the whole World, loudly demanding Evidence, and challenging them to produce a single Instance; yet these extravagant and ungrounded Surmises were continually pleaded, as a sufficient Excuse for all their Cruelty and Barbarity: Nor is the most holy and inoffensive Saint in the World always secure from the Lash of Tongues, set on Fire of Hell; and how common is it, that the more Strict and Pious, the more exposed to ill Will and Reproach.

Nay, what is yet more strange, Saints may, sometimes, be unjustly censured by

^e Matt. x. 24, 25.

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their fellow Professors and Brethren in the Lord. *Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar*, the three Friends of *Job*, seemed to have been much affected with his Case, and, by solemn Appointment, met to mourn with him, and to comfort him; and, at the first View of him, so much alter'd by the Troubles of his Mind, and the Distemper of his Body, that they hardly knew him; they lift up their Voice and wept, and rent every one his Mantle, and sprinkled Dust upon their Heads towards Heaven, and sat down with him on the Ground, seven Days and seven Nights, without speaking; for they saw that his Grief was very great. But no sooner did they open, but they discovered their Mistake; *Behold*, says *Eliphaz*, *thou hast instructed many, and thou hast strengthen'd the weak Hands: But now it is come upon thee, and thou faintest; it toucheth thee, and thou art troubled: And, with an Air of Insult and Upbraiding, he adds, Is not this thy Fear, thy Confidence, thy Hope, and the Uprightness of thy Ways? Remember, I pray thee, who ever perished, being innocent? or, where were the Righteous cut off? Even as I have seen, they who plow Iniquity, and sow Wickedness, reap the same. By the Blast of God they perish, and by the Breath of his Nostrils are they consumedⁿ. And when the good*

ⁿ Job iv. 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9.

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Man replied, That were his Grief thoroughly weighed, and his Calamity laid in the Balances together, it would be heavier than the Sand of the Sea; and that the Arrows of the Almighty were within him, the Poison whereof had drank up his Spirits; and gently reproves him, by observing, that *to him that is afflicted, Pity should be shewed from his Friends.* Bildad, another of his Friends, renews the Charge, that either he, or his Children, had sinned; and that if he were indeed pure and upright, God would awake for him, *and make the Habitation of Righteousness prosperous*¹. And when Job had answer'd him, by acknowledging God's Justice and his own Transgressions; Zophar pursues the same Argument, and, with the utmost Severity, fastens the Charge upon him; so that he might well say, *Miserable Comforters are ye all*; and God himself declares, they had not said the Thing that was right; and puts an Honour on his Servant Job, that he is not to be appeased but by his Intercession for them.

However, let the Charge arise from what Quarter soever, from the common Enemy, his Instruments, or our mistaken Friends, where it is without Foundation, though it should not be in the Power of the Saint always to vindicate himself in this World,

¹ Job viii. 4, 6.

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his Innocence shall appear to his own Honour, and the Confusion of his Enemies, in that Day in which the Lord will make up his Jewels, when all shall discern between him that feareth the Lord, and him that feareth him not.

3. Where they will appear to have been really guilty, and to have been justly worthy of Blame; the Merit of the Obedience, and Suffering of their Surety and Mediator, will be produced as the Foundation of their Discharge, and a sufficient Plea for their Admission to eternal Glory; for the Apostle's Challenge will be as unanswerable then, as it is now; *Who shall lay any Thing to the Charge of God's Elect? since it is God that justifies, Who is he that condemns? It is Christ that died, yea, rather that is risen again.*

So that though the Saints cannot plead Guiltless, and must acknowledge their Desert of Punishment, yet, when the Name of Christ shall appear in their Bond, then shall it be known to all, that he paid the Debt, and received a Discharge in their Name. God will appear to be just whilst they escape the Curse, and inherit the Blessing of eternal Life.

Lastly, When the Dead, small and great, shall stand before God, and the Books shall be opened, then will be opened the Book of Life; and, in the Hearing of Angels and Men, their Names will be read over as the
Men

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Men whom God delights to honour ; and out of the Book of his Remembrance, all those Instances of Kindness and Liberality, Pity and Compassion, Self-Denial, Temperance and Piety, which, through the grace of God, they have at any Time been found in the Performance of in this World, shall have an honourable Mention ; for thus the Judge himself has assured us, that when he shall come in his Glory, and all the holy Angels with him, seated on his Throne, and before him all Nations, to his Friends on his right Hand he will say, *Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the Foundation of the World. For I was an hungred, and ye gave me Meat ; I was thirsty, and ye gave me Drink ; I was a Stranger, and ye took me in ; naked, and ye clothed me ; sick, and ye visited me : I was in Prison, and ye came unto me. Then shall the Righteous answer him, Lord, When saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee ? or thirsty, and gave thee Drink ? To which he will reply ; Verily I say unto you, inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my Brethren, ye have done it unto me^k.*

And how should this quiet the Mind of the Believer when unjustly evil spoken of ; perhaps, after all the Pains he has warrantably been at to vindicate his Character, ma-

^k Matt. xxv. 34—40.

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ny are either weak, or wicked enough to believe the malicious Falshood ; but it is his Mercy, that as God knows the Way he takes, he has his Record on high ; so the World shall, one Day, know how far they have injured him. And with what Shame will the Wicked appear before their Judge, when he comes with ten Thousand of his Saints to execute Judgment upon all, to convince them of all their ungodly Deeds which they have ungodlily committed, and of all their hard Speeches which ungodly Sinners have spoke against him or his People ; How will they be ashamed at the Sight of those whom they once treated as the Off-scouring of all Things, when cloathed with shining Robes of Glory, every one wearing his Crown, and holding his Palm ; whilst the Curse goes out against themselves, and their Doom is sealed for ever ?

And this should teach the Saints themselves, to be as favourable in their Censures, as a due Regard to God's Honour, and the Good of his Interest will admit of ; and let us take Heed how, at any Time, from particular Instances of Conduct, we rashly determine the State of any one, a Province altogether foreign from us, reserved in the Hands of the great Sovereign, and in which we are so liable to mistake. I doubt not, but if Blushing were possible in Heaven, it would be found with some of those who have been
guilty,

guilty, in this Respect, on Earth, upon their meeting with some of their backsliding Brethren, for whom they had no Charity whilst here. Which leads us

To consider Perfection, as it respects the Imployment of the Saints in Glory. And,

(1.) It will be the most noble and honourable, the most worthy of God, and best suited to the rational and renewed Part, consisting chiefly in Contemplation, Conference, Adoration and Praise.

The Works of God bespeak their great Original, as they exhibit to us Notices of his Wisdom, Power and Godhead; and the more abundantly they discover the Perfection of their great Creator, the more worthy of our Contemplation; *David* was well employ'd, when, as a religious Philosopher, he was considering the heavenly Bodies in their Nature, Order, and Use; and cried out, *Lord, What is Man, that thou art mindful of him* ^m? But the Apostle had the Advantage of him, when, surveying the Mysteries of sovereign Grace, and distinguishing Mercy, he breaks out, *O the Depth of the Riches both of the Wisdom and the Knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his Judgments, and his Ways are past finding out! For who hath known the Mind of the Lord, or who hath been his Counsellor? Or who hath first given*

^m Psal. viii. 4.

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to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? For of him, and through him, and to him, are all Thingsⁿ. But in this Respect it may be said, as our Lord observed upon the Character which he had given of *John the Baptist*, that he that is least in the Kingdom of Heaven, was greater than he. Our Work here, at best, is mixed; we have our civil and social Concernments; Food and Raiment, and a Supply for our Families, is to be obtained by a Blessing of God on our Industry; so that we are divided between a Variety of Employments, and attended with frequent Avocations from serious Thoughts, and spiritual Meditations. But as the Body shall be so far spiritual, as to hunger and thirst no more; so there will be nothing to call off our Minds from holy Meditation.

Nor will our Discourse be about mean, vain, trifling, or sinful Things, but such as will become the Sons of God, and worthy the Attention of Angels themselves: And whilst the Soul, with unknown Pleasures to it self, shall be thus imploy'd, every new Idea will create fresh Wonder, increase its Flame of Love, and inlarge its Occasion of Praise: Now what Work can a rational, holy Creature be conceived to be engaged in, so worthy of God, and glorious to himself, as to be looking into the Counsels of his Will,

ⁿ Rom. xi. 33, 34, 35, 36.

the Secrets of his Providence, the Heights and Depths of his Love; and whilst looking, loving; and whilst loving, adoring.

(2.) This their Employment will be without Pain or Weariness, without Interruption or End.

When a Christian is in a proper Frame of Spirit, though call'd out to hard and difficult Service; it cannot be said of him, that he is weary of his Work; but the most Vigorous and Active, Strong and Healthy, have had, sometimes, Reason to complain that they are weary in it, or by it: Nor can the Mind be long kept on the Stretch without some Degree of Pain; nor would it suit our Health, any more than be agreeable to our Inclinations, to be always engaged in one Way; and it's a melancholy Truth, that, with too much Difficulty or Reluctance, we are employ'd about the best Things. But in Heaven the Mind will be fitted everlastingly to meditate; and when meditating, to feed on holy and spiritual Subjects; nor will there be any Thing to break in upon, or interrupt us for ever: But if ever we reach the Temple of God, we shall serve him Day and Night in it; singing the Songs of *Moses* and of the Lamb, throughout the unknown Ages of Eternity.

Lastly, The Believer will be as happy in his Entertainment, as honourable in his Work. For,

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[1.] It will be full, nothing wanting that is necessary to make up, or compleat his Felicity.

I am thy Shield, says God to *Abraham*, and *thy exceeding great Reward*: As Children, the Saints are Heirs of God, and joint Heirs with Christ; and is there any Thing that the Heart can conceive to be wanting, when God himself, the rich and inexhaustible Fountain of all Blessedness, is their Portion and Inheritance; when he, who can make them as happy as he will, will make them as blessed as they will wish to be. It is not a Throne, Crown, or Kingdom only, that God has promised his People, but himself; and what can he give them more? Father, Son and Spirit will hold a most intimate and everlasting Communion with them; the Apostle desired no more than to be with Christ; for he knew that he was at God's right Hand, where there is Fulness of Joy, and where there are Pleasures for evermore; here the Saint sometimes sweetly tastes the Streams of that River which makes glad the City of God, and they dare not be unthankful for the Mercy; since the least of Heaven is a glorious Favour to them who have deserved the Miseries of Hell: But when admitted to the most intimate Injoyment of Fellowship with the Father and the Son, it is yet but in Part, and not to be compared with what they hope for
in

in Glory. Sometimes Christ unveils his Face, and, e'er they are aware, their Hearts are like the Chariots of a willing People; but how strong is the Expression concerning the better World? *Well done good and faithful Servant, enter thou into the Joy of thy Lord*; here it enters into us as small Streams from the Fountain; there we shall enter into it as a fathomless Ocean of Delight.

[2.] Our Appetite for, and Relish of it, will be as lasting as the Blessing it self.

Christ represents himself as the Bread of Life, the heavenly Manna, of which, who-soever eateth spiritually, shall never die; nor shall he evermore thirst after sensual, worldly Advantages, in the Manner, or to the Degree he did before his eating of this spiritual Food. This, as hard a Saying as it was to the *Jews*, contained in it no more than a familiar Representation of the Necessity of a spiritual Communion with him, in whom it has pleased the Father that all Fulness should dwell, that from his Fulness we might receive, and Grace for Grace; but we have this Advantage by the Manner of the Relation, that we hence naturally collect, that Believers in him, shall live; that is, be happy to Eternity; that he will be the Medium of conveying and continuing this Life to them, and that they will ever feed with Pleasure and Delight upon him; nor will there be the least Danger of their

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their being cloy'd with this heavenly Food, or satiated with this delightful Entertainment; for the Pleasure of Fruition will constantly attend the Succession of Injoyment. What the *Jews* tell us of the material Manna, which miraculously was rained down from Heaven about their Tents, that it suited every Appetite, and pleased every Taste, may, without Danger of exceeding, be affirmed of the Pleasures at God's right Hand; which, as they will be many and various, so they will be everlastingly agreeable; represented by a *pure River of Water, clear as Chrystal, proceeding out of the Throne of God, and the Lamb*; and by a *Tree of Life, which bears twelve Manner of Fruits, and yields her Fruit every Month* °: And this is intended by our Lord, when he says, *I appoint you a Kingdom, that ye may eat and drink at my Table in my Kingdom, as well as sit on Thrones, judging the twelve Tribes of Israel* v.

And as their Relish will be maintained, so the Blessing will be eternal; hence called everlasting Life, an incorruptible Crown, an eternal Weight of Glory, and an Inheritance which is incorruptible, undefiled, and which fadeth not away; so that if they possess as much as they can desire, with constant Pleasure, and uninterrupted Delight, and

° Rev. xxii. 1, 2.

v Luke xxii. 30.

this

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this to continue for ever ; What can be added to the Account, or give us a more compleat View of the Perfection of their Felicity ? After all, it must be confessed, Experience will make us the best Judges of Heaven.

And now, if we should consider the Words as they may be applied to a Sinner, of whom, in a Sense, it is true, *When that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away* ; they may teach us, that whatever he has met with of Pain, Trouble and Sorrow here, is but in Part, and only an Introduction to what awaits him hereafter ; if he has a few good Things in this Life, being abused by his Lusts, he shall have many more and bitter evil Things, when he is tormented in the other World ; whether he drops into the Grave unobserv'd, or attended with the costly Pomp of a magnificent Funeral, the Soul finds it self in the infernal Pit, without Servants or Retinue, Friend or Comforter ; and if it is enlarged, as some conceive it will be, it is that it may be susceptible of more Pain and Misery ; nor will it receive the least Satisfaction by its Re-union with the Body, in the Resurrection Day ; but a large Increase of Torment and Disgrace ; the Place of their everlasting Abode, no other than that *Tophet* ordain'd of old, for the Workers of Iniquity ; the Smoke of which bottomless Pit will

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will ascend before God Day and Night, for ever; his Companions in Misery, infernal Spirits, and the Wicked, Impenitent and Unbelieving from among the Children of Men. When his Name shall be called over in the great Day, he will remain speechless, having nothing to offer in his own Favour, and covered with Confusion, hear the dreadful Sentence denounced, Depart from me thou cursed: His Work will be weeping and wailing, and gnashing of Teeth, attended with the most cutting Reflection on himself, and Blasphemies against his Judge; and his Portion be the unmix'd Wrath of a Sin avenging God, who, with relentless Fury, will tear him in Pieces, whilst there shall be none to deliver.

Upon the Whole, we may observe,

1st. How unwise are Sinners, what Enemies to themselves, in preferring the short liv'd Pleasures, perishing Profits, and uncertain Honours of this World, to that Treasure, *which neither Moth can corrupt, nor Thieves break through and steal*: One would be almost tempted to think, from the Conduct of many, that they never so much as heard of Heaven, by the Hearing of the Ears; or that they concluded it was designed for others, whilst themselves were to continue always here: If our Lord's Rule is to determine the Case, How few have Treasure in Heaven! since the most are visibly bowing
down

down to the Mammon of this World as their Idol, spend their Time and Thoughts, waste their Strength, and consume their Health, in obtaining what they must quickly part with; What anxious Concern to preserve their Acquisitions, and how loud and bitter their Complaints on the Loss of them? And is this consistent with a thorough and steady Persuasion, that they are only Sojourners here on Earth, hastening to his Bar; who has said, Seek first the Kingdom of God, and the Righteousness thereof; when it has been the very last Thing in their Thoughts, and, as a Thing of small Importance, or no Account, put off to the Decline of Life. It must be granted, that Things temporal have the Advantage of being visible and present with us, and near at hand; but Experience may teach us, that as present as they appear to be, we are far enough from Satisfaction in the Possession of them: At best, they are designed but as Helps and Accommodations by the Way; nor can they, when united, make up a proper Portion; so that we may conclude with our Lord, that if a Man gained the whole World, and loses his own Soul, the Consequence must be dreadful to himself; since the Riches of ten Thousand Worlds would not redeem that Soul from Ruin and Destruction.

2^{dly}. Let

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2^{dly}. Let us not look for absolute Perfection in others, and beg of God that we may advance as near to it as possible our selves. The best of Men are but Men, Men of like Passions, surrounded by the same Temptations, apt to mistake in Judgment, or to be irresolute and wavering in Designs ever so well concerted ; frequently surprized with unthought of, unforeseen Accidents, and ingaged and diverted by new and different Objects ; so that if we look for absolute Perfection in a Father, a Friend, a Child, or Fellow-professor, we must wait till we come to Heaven for it ; and whilst this should lessen our Resentment, and abate our Indignation against those who may act either a weak or unbecoming Part towards us : Let us never give over beseeching the Throne of Grace, that we may make continual Advances, and nearer Approaches towards that Perfection which will be the crowning Blessing of Immortality.

3^{dly}. What more powerful Motive to excite our Zeal for God, and ingage us to lay out our Time, Talents and Strength, in his Service, than the Consideration of this glorious Recompence of Reward : He that lives in a believing Expectation to receive so much from God, in the End, will hardly be tempted to grudge him any Thing by the Way. And let this be an Answer to every Tem-

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**Temptation, How shall I do this and offend
that God whom I hope to enjoy for ever ;
and, when ready to be weary and faint in our
Minds, let us think of the Prize before us ;
and, by a patient Continuance in well do-
ing, be seeking for Glory, Honour, Immor-
tality, and eternal Life.**





SERMON VII.

The BELIEVER SEALED.

2 COR. i. 22.

Who hath also sealed us, and given the Earnest of the Spirit in our Hearts.



THE Apostle having vindicated himself from the Charge of Lightness, or Inconstancy, in not coming to *Corinth*, as he designed, and of which he had given the Church an Intimation; takes an Occasion to mention that beautiful Consistency and Harmony which there is between the several Parts of the Gospel; the whole of which being every

Way

Way worthy of its glorious Author ; is wisely calculated to promote the best and noblest Purposes, whilst the Creature is stripped of all his Plumes of Pride, and laid in the Dust, and rich and sovereign Grace alone exalted, it is far from giving the least Encouragement to Sin ; but the Necessity of Holiness, as our Meetness for Heaven, equally asserted with the Importance of Christ's Righteousness, for our Justification and Acceptance in the Sight of God ; and though many and various were the Instruments who were imploy'd in making known the glad Tidings of Salvation, they all agreed in determining to know nothing but Christ, and him crucified ; nor did they preach one Thing at one Time, and the contrary at another, or foolishly attempt to blend Extreams, and reconcile Inconsistencies ; but a proper Uniformity appeared through the whole of their Discourses, whilst they endeavoured to recommend themselves to God, and to every Man's Conscience in the Sight of God ; for the Truth of this, he appeals to their own Observation, who had enjoy'd the Blessing of his Ministry among them ; to which agreed the Doctrine that was preached by *Silvanus* and *Timotheus*, and all the rest of his Fellow-labourers : But least any should charge this upon him as an Instance of Vanity and Ostentation, or mistake him, as if he judged himself sufficient
for

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for these Things; he adds, *He that establisheth us with you, and hath anointed us, is God*; all our Abilities, as if he had said, for, and Steadiness and Faithfulness in the Discharge of our Duty, is owing to that Grace or Anointing, which we have received from God, from whom comes every good and every perfect Gift; and to this he subjoins the Words of our Text; *Who hath also sealed us, and given us the Earnest of the Spirit in our Hearts*: Not that we are to imagine this was a Privilege peculiar to the Apostles, or the first Preachers of the Gospel; for we find it affirmed of the Saints in common: Thus the Apostle writing to the Church at *Ephesus*, says, *In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the Word of Truth, the Gospel of your Salvation; in whom also, after that ye believed, ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of Promise*; and makes Use of this as an Argument to caution them against every Thing that might be ^a offensive or provoking to the Holy Spirit.

If it should be inquir'd by any, Whether the Apostle intends one and the same Thing by being sealed, and by having the Earnest of the Spirit in our Hearts? I humbly conceive, in the Main, he does; and that they may be, in a good Degree, exegetical, or explanatory one of the other: But as he is

^a Ephes. iv. 30.

pleased to make Use of this Variety, we may safely follow him in it; and accordingly shall,

- I. Consider the Privilege it self under this twofold Representation of *Sealing* and an *Earnest*.
- II. Endeavour to show you that it is the Work of God, and can be of no other.
- III. That it is a Blessing bestowed in a Way of meer Grace, said therefore to be *given* us. And,
- IV. Our Duty with respect to it, whether as unacquainted with, or as having the delightful Experience of it. We begin,

I. With the Privilege it self, represented by *Sealing* and an *Earnest*.

First, It is called by the Name of *Sealing*, which, in the Scripture Use of the Term, takes in the following Particulars:

i. Sometimes it denotes an Authority to execute a Commission of Moment and Importance: Thus the Credentials of Embassadors, the Instructions of Plenipotentiaries, and the Patents of chief Ministers, Judges, and great Officers of State, have usually the King's Seal affixed to them, signifying their being impowered by him, or their acting in his Name, and by his Authority: Thus *Abab's* Wife wrote Letters to the Elders and

Nobles of the City of *Naboth*, and sealed them with the King's Seal^b. So *Haman* sealed the Letters, directed to the Governors of the Provinces, to destroy the *Jews*, and take the Spoil of them for a Prey^c. And this, I think, is evidently the Meaning of the Term, when our Lord applies it to himself; *Labour not for the Meat which perisheth, but for that Meat which endureth unto everlasting Life; which the Son of Man shall give unto you; for him hath God the Father sealed^d*; that is, as it is explained, the Father hath given him Power over all Flesh, that he should give eternal Life to as many as he gave him^e. Thus the Apostles were eminently sealed, or authorized and commanded by the great Redeemer, to bear Witness of him in *Judea*, and among the *Gentiles*; and the surprizing Gift of Tongues, the miraculous Power of healing Diseases, with the vast Success which attended their Ministry, was a manifest Attestation that they were the Servants of the most high God, sent to show unto Men the Way of Salvation; and, in a Sense, it is true of every Minister of the Gospel, who, having received the Grace of God himself, is called by Providence to preach the Mysteries of the Kingdom, that he has the Seal of Heaven, as it were, with him; for herein he acts by the Command

^b 1 Kings xxi. 8.
^c John xvii. 2.

^e Esth. iii. 12, 13.

^d John vi. 27.

of the great King and Law-giver of the Church ; who tells us, All Power in Heaven and Earth was given unto him ; and therefore commands his Ministers to go and preach the Gospel, and to teach all Nations.

And as every private Believer has a Work to do for God, whilst in this World, as far as he is enabled to keep close to the Rule of his Word, he has a Warrant from Heaven for the Performance of it ; and where he is hinder'd, opposed, or despised in the Discharge of what God requires, the Affront ultimately terminates on him, who hath appointed his Servants to go and bring forth Fruit to his Honour and Glory.

2. Sealing, sometimes, denotes Secrecy or Concealment. Thus we seal up Records, Writings, or Papers, which are not proper to be exposed to open or common View : And thus the Church is compared to a *Garden enclosed, a Spring shut up, a Fountain sealed*^f ; her Privileges are peculiar to her self ; her Joys and Sorrows a Stranger intermeddleth not with ; and in this Sense it may be said of every particular Believer, his Life is hid with Christ in God : God sees more in his People than the World can ; he hears more from them than their Fellow-creatures are sensible of ; and converses

^f Cant. iv. 12.

graciously with them, whilst the rest of the World are Strangers to this delightful Fellowship. The Believer has much to do in the Closet by himself, in communing with his own Heart, when his Spirit makes diligent Search; he is frequently pouring out his Soul to God in Secret, where no Eye sees him but that of his heavenly Father; he has his Hopes and Fears, his Trials and Temptations, his Agonies and Conflicts, his Triumphs and Exultations, of which the Wicked and Ungodly are either wholly ignorant, or very incompetent Judges.

3. A Seal is used to distinguish one Thing from another: Thus a Merchant fixes his Seal on his Lot of Goods, and the Husbandman his Mark on his Cattle, to prevent Disputes about Property. Thus when the Apostle had mentioned *Hymeneus* and *Philetus*, as Apostates from the Truth, lest it should stumble the Weak; he adds, *Nevertheless, the Foundation of God stands sure; having this Seal, the Lord knoweth them that are his*; the whole Election of Grace have this Seal of God upon them; he knows each and every of them, as having enrolled their Names in the Lamb's Book of Life, and predestinated them in his unchangeable Purpose and Decree, to the Adoption of Children; this

may be called God's secret Seal, which becomes visible when he stamps his own Image upon them in Regeneration, whereby they are distinguished from the Ungodly in the Possession of Grace, and marked out as designed for Glory; and though this does not equally appear to themselves, or others, at all Times, Grace being sometimes at a low Ebb in the Soul; yet it is always discerned by him, who knows his Image wherever he sees it.

4. It sometimes is expressive of our Regard to, and value for any Thing, as well as our Property in it. Thus we seal up Jewels and Treasure, and other valuable Commodities, and so many have understood that Request of the Church, *Set me as a Seal upon thine Heart, as a Seal upon thine Arm*^h; alluding to the Custom of Persons in the Eastern Countries, who frequently wore the Pourtrait of an esteem'd Friend engraven on a Signet, or as a Picture near their Heart, or upon their Arm; and what favours this Interpretation is, God's Promise to *Zerubbabel*, that he would make him as a Signetⁱ; and his threatening *Coniah*, the Son of *Jeboiakim*, King of *Judah*, that though he ware a Signet on his right Hand, yet would he pluck him thence^k. And how exceedingly affectionate is that Answer

^h Cant. viii. 6.

ⁱ Hag. ii. 23.

^k Jer. xxii. 24.

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of the Lord to the Church's Complaint, that he had forsaken and forgotten her: *Can a Woman forget her sucking Child, that she should not have Compassion on the Son of her Womb? Yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee. Behold, I have graven thee on the Palms of my Hands; thy Walls are continually before me*¹. And thus Aaron was an illustrious Type of Christ, when he went into the Holy of Holies, having the Names of the twelve Tribes on his Breast-Plate; to which answers our Lord's Intercession for his People in Heaven, where he ever appears in the Presence of God for them whom he regards as his Jewels, his choice Treasure and Inheritance, not one of which will he ever suffer to be lost.

5. The most common Use of a Seal, is to ratify Covenants, or confirm Deeds: Thus the Princes, Levites, and Priests, having wrote a Covenant, set their Seal unto it, in Confirmation of it^m. And so we read, that he who receiveth the Testimony of Christ, *bath set to his Seal, that God is true*ⁿ. And this, I apprehend to be the principal Meaning of the Term in the Text, denoting the Spirit's attesting, or bearing Witness with our Spirits, that we are Children; and so Heirs of God, and Joint-Heirs with Christ; and this is sometimes more immediately, by some special

¹ Isa. xlix. 15, 16.

^m Nehem. ix. 38.

ⁿ John iii. 33.

Discovery of divine Love: Thus *David* says, *Thou hast put Gladness into my Heart*, when God lifted up the Light of his Countenance upon him °. Nor is it to be question'd but there are some glorious Seasons in which the Lord, the Spirit, as a Comforter, shines in upon the Understanding, enlarges the Affections, and having raised by his Power, satisfies their strong Desires with his Love; when, in his Light, they see Light, and, comfortably beholding the Grace wherein they stand, rejoice with a Joy unspeakable and full of Glory: This is the most delightful Mercy that can be enjoy'd on this side Heaven, and is usually vouchsafed as a Preparative for some Trials, or great Temptations, or as a Cordial, to support the drooping Spirits of the fainting Saints, when his Heart is ready to be overwhelmed within him; at other Times the Spirit is pleased to make Use of Means: Thus he enables the Soul to converse with the Promises; and, whilst he is pondering on the Import and Meaning of them, he discovers to him the exceeding great and precious Things they contain, and enabling him to fasten on them, with some Degree of Propriety, he powerfully assures him, that God is faithful, who has promised, who also will do it; and engages him, with Pleasure and Expectance,

° P^{sa}. iv. 7.

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to wait for their Accomplishment: (But this will be more largely insisted on in the following Discourse.)

Thus, again, under the Preaching of the Gospel, or attending on Ordinances, especially that of the Lord's Supper, he is graciously pleased, sometimes, to seal his People unto the Day of Redemption. In the one they, sometimes, hear the Voice of the Son of God, saying, *Be of good Cheer, your Sins are forgiven*: In the other, they see the King in his Beauty, and he comes and sups with them, and they are admitted to sup with him with that Freedom and Intimacy, that they can say which the Church of old, *My Beloved is mine, and I am his*; or, with the Apostle, *I know whom I have believed*; and, *he loved me, and gave himself for me.*

However, whether the Blessing be given more immediately, or in the Use of Means, it is always attended with the deepest Abasement, and the most humble Thoughts of our selves, as well as high and honourable Apprehensions of the Riches and Sovereignty of the Grace of God. We proceed,

Secondly, To consider the other Representation that we have of this Privilege as an Earnest; a Term used in Traffick or Commerce; when the Person agreeing for his Purchase, pays down a Part before hand, by which he binds the Bargain, and obliges himself

self to pay the Remainder on the Delivery of the Goods. Now, as an Earnest is a Part, and but a Part of what we design to give; and yet, how small a Part soever, obliges to the Performance; when we apply the Ideas to this Work of the Spirit, they way teach us,

1. That Communion with God here, is of the same Kind or Nature with the everlasting Fellowship we hope to enjoy with God hereafter; as the first Fruits were of the same Kind with the latter, so God sends his Spirit into the Hearts of his People, who, by his consolatory sealing Operations, is to acquaint them, in some Degree, what Heaven is before they come to it; for the Joy of the Christian in believing whilst here, differs rather in Degree than Kind, from that Fulness of Joy, and those Pleasures which will flow for ever at God's right Hand hereafter.

2. As it is a Part, so it is but a small Part, and not to be compared with that far more exceeding and eternal Weight of Glory and Happiness which he shall be possessed of when he comes to the full Injoyment of his Inheritance; and yet,

3. As inconsiderable a Part as it may seem to be, in the Experience of some, who but rarely enjoy it, and, at best, in a lower Degree, it is a certain Pledge of the Whole of that which is preserved for him in Reversion;

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tion ; for the Promise is most sure, being the Word of him who cannot lie ; that where God gives grace he will give Glory ; this he is not indeed obliged to from any other Necessity than that of his own sovereign Mercy, in ordaining them unto eternal Life ; nor have they the least Claim to it, otherways than as interested in the Merit of *his* Obedience and Sufferings ; who pray'd, *Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, to behold my Glory* ^p.

And it's worthy of our Notice, how the Blessings of Grace and Glory stand connected together in Scripture : The Account, that our Lord gives of his Sheep is, that they were given to him of his Father, drawn to him by the attractive Power of Love, in Consequence of which they hear his Voice and follow him ; and that as he gave his Life for them, and has provided Pasture for them, and will be a Protection to them on Earth ; so they shall never perish, but inherit eternal Life ; and agreeable hereunto the Apostle observes, effectual Calling, Justification, Sanctification, and Glorification, are linked together as so many glorious Privileges ; which, when any one of them is possessed now, shall be attended with the Injoyment of them all hereafter ; so that

^p John xvii, 24.

God

God has not only bound himself by the two immutable Things, his Promise and his Oath; but the very Experience of his People, as to Holiness and Comfort, is a very safe Foundation for the Conclusion, that he who hath wrought them for this self same Inheritance, and given them some Foretastes of it, will, e'er long, abundantly answer their Expectations, by fulfilling all his In-
gagements. Which leads us,

II. To consider this sealing as the Work of God, and what can be effected by no other. It is applied to the Father, in the Text, as distinguished in Personality from the Spirit, whose Agency the Father is supposed to make Use of: In other Places of Scripture it is more eminently attributed to the Lord, the Spirit, and this with a great Deal of Consistency; since whatsoever is said to be done by each of the Three Persons in the Salvation of Man, may be considered as the Work of them all who are undivided in Nature, and in all their external Operations.

That none but God can seal the Saints, is evident from its being Heart-Work; none but he who made the Heart, has access to it; nor is it in the Power of Men or Angels to bind up the broken in Heart; all attempts this way prove unsuccessful, till God speaks Pardon and Peace in the Blood
of

of his Son, and sheds abroad his Love in the Heart, by the Power of the Holy Ghost; Men may hope well concerning us, heartily desire our eternal Welfare, and, in a Judgment of Charity, conclude that our State is safe, and that God is reconciled unto us; but as none but God can forgive Sin, so he only can pronounce Absolution; so as to make the Bones, which Sin has broken, to rejoice: And it is very observable, that some Saints who have walked in Darkness, perhaps, for many Years, and received little Satisfaction concerning their own State, from the most judicious, spiritual Discourses of their sympathizing Friends, have been at once raised to a full Assurance of Faith, by the consolatory Witnessings of the Spirit with their Spirits, in a Way, and to a Degree altogether unthought of and unexpected, whilst they were writing bitter Things against themselves; and that this was more than a Fancy, or warm Imagination, has been evident in their great Humility and Heavenly-mindedness, Chearfulness under Trouble, and Vigour in running the Paths of God's Commandments; and what can this be referred to, but to his Grace, who says to the Prisoners, *Go forth?* and who, as the God of all Consolation, scatters their Clouds, answers their Doubts, and causes them to rejoice and triumph in Christ Jesus: So that we may say with *Elibu*, *When he giveth*
Quiet-

Quietness, who can make Trouble? and when he hideth his Face, who can behold him? whether it be done against a Nation, or a Man only?

III. The Blessing, where-ever bestowed, is given in a Way of mere Grace.

This appears from the Consideration of the Mercy it self; as it is the greatest Privilege on this side Glory, so the Person who is the Author of it, is absolutely independent, and above all possible Obligation, as well as from the Circumstances of the Party who is the Subject of it, a defiled, guilty, Hell deserving Sinner, with whom there is no Merit but of eternal Death; and from the different Degree of the Experience of it, which some Saints are favoured with above others, when they are in themselves equally without Claim or Title to it, as well as from the utter Impossibility of attaining it, when God is pleased sovereignly to withhold it: Nor can it be disputed, when all is of Mercy, undeserved Mercy, the Blessings of Providence, the Gift of Grace, and the Whole of our Christian Experience, that this, which is the chiefest Part of it, is owing to the mere Favour of the Sun of Righteousness, arising and shining upon the Soul with healing in his Wings: So that

P Job xxiv. 29.

with

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with the Apostle, we may justly render *Thanks to God, who, at any Time, causeth us to triumph in Christ* ^a. Which leads us,

IV. and *Lastly*, To consider the Duty of those who are either wholly unacquainted with it, or of such who have had the delightful Experience of it.

1. Of those who are, as yet, unacquainted with it ; and they are either Sinners, who live without God, and without Christ, and without Hope in the World ; these call loudly for our Pity, as Strangers to the pure, spiritual, refreshing, and entertaining Joys of the Christian ; What is all, their Mirth, but Folly and Vanity ! their Laughter little better than Madness ; their Satisfactions, how empty, fading, and transitory ! how frequently interrupted by the Throws and Pangs of a guilty Conscience ! and how soon will they exchange them for the dreadful Agonies of that Worm that dieth not : Could they be persuaded to believe the Peace and Consolation which the Saints enjoy, how readily would they quit the vain and short lived Pleasures arising from Sense and Sin, for that Peace of Conscience, which the Believer, when sprinkled with the Blood of Jesus, has the comfortable Experience of. But besides these, there are others who are

^a 2 Cor. ii. 14.

truly gracious, who may not have arrived to the full Injoyment of the Blessing contained in the Text, they have a Hope, a good Hope through Grace, but accompanied with many Fears; to such as these it may be said,

(1.) That Assurance is not of the Essence of Faith; so that they are not presently to conclude, because they have not the same Degrees of Joy, holy Boldness, and spiritual Confidence towards God, that therefore they are not in the Family; for God has Children of various Ages, and different Stature, Babes as well as strong Men; and the good Shepherd has promised, that he will carry the Lambs in his Arms, as well as lead his Sheep into green Pastures, and beside the still Waters; he will not break the bruised Reed, nor quench the smoking Flax, but bring forth Judgment unto Victory; nor does he despise the Day of small Things; it is one Thing to be a Child of God, and another to know it; the former is sufficient to ascertain our Happiness, the latter is the Foundation of our Triumph.

(2.) These are to be directed to bless God for the little they have, and importunately to plead, that in his own Time and Way he would lead them into more intimate Communion with himself and his Son, till they are comfortably sealed by the Spirit of Promise. Ingratitude for past Mercies may just-

justly provoke God to withhold those which are future ; and a repining, fretful Frame, under lesser Attainments, is not likely to be owned with farther Communications : Remember, no Part of the Christian Experience can be called little, when we have deserved to be left in the State of fallen Angels ; and especially as Glory stands as much connected with Grace, though but as a Grain of Mustard-Seed, as it does with the richest Experiences, and the most exalted Joys, which have at any Time been found with the Redeemed of the Lord. And, would you find the Blessing ? seek it where it has usually been met with : The Christian who lives the most with God in private, bids the fairest for the Experience of it ; nor can you justly expect it, whilst your Hearts are too much in the World, and your Affections divided between Christ and other Objects ; it's little less than Blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, to talk of being sealed by the Spirit, whilst pursuing the Paths of Sin ; if corrupt Communication proceeds out of your Mouths, if Bitterness, Wrath, Anger, Clamour, Evil-speaking, and Malice, attend you, the Spirit is grieved, and will suspend his consolatory Influences ; you may judge where he is most likely to Seal, or bear Witness in our Favour by the Fruits of the Spirit ; which are Love, Peace, Long-suffering, Gentleness, Goodness, Faith, Meekness, Temperance,

rance, where these Things are in you and abound, it will not be long before they shall be accompanied with Joy, another Fruit of the same Spirit, even that Joy which a Stranger intermeddleth not with.

(2.) Have we, at any Time, had the sweet Experience of this Mercy? Has God established our Faith, enlarged our Peace, raised our Hope, by the inward Witnessings of his own Spirit? How should we blush to think that we have valued the Mercy no more, and made so little an Improvement of it! What is the Meaning of that Carnality, Carelessness, Coldness, and Indifferency, which hath since overtaken us? How illy have we requited him? who, according to his Promise, when parting with his Disciples, hath sent the Comforter into our Hearts? May he not justly upbraid us with the most heinous and provoking Disingenuity, for our Omission of Duty, or the superficial Manner of its Performance, for our Treachery and Proneness to backslide; and say, Is this the Return which I have for loving you, and leaving my Father's Bosom, for living a Life of Poverty and Contempt, and dying the cursed Death of the Cross; and after I had gained you by the Power of my Arm, as well as redeemed you by the Price of my Blood, How have I spoke Peace to your troubled Consciences? What were your Engagements to me in the

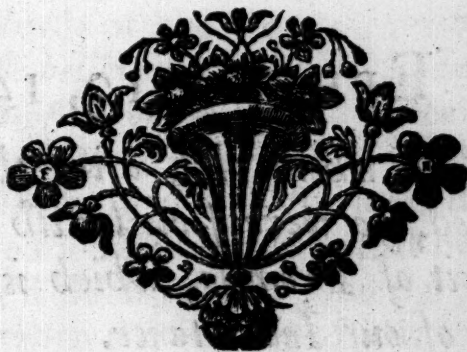
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Morning of your Espousals? And have I not sometimes taken you into the Secret of my Presence, and shown you my Covenant, and held you, for a Time, to the believing View of the Glories of the invisible World? and, after all, to offend, dishonour, and wound me! How unworthy! How disingenuous! Sin is an abominable Evil in God's Sight, where-ever he beholds it; but the Sins of his People have the additional Aggravation of being committed against the richest Displays of Grace; and for this God sometimes hides his Face; so that those who could once say, This God is our God, and will be so for ever and ever, are suffer'd to go mourning, and dejected with Sorrow, to their Graves.

And this should teach the Saint to whom to apply for this desirable Mercy, and where to render his Thanks for it: The Lord, the Spirit, is the Guide and Sanctifier, and Comforter of *Sion*; to whom should we go then, but to him, for Wisdom, Holiness, and Joy: And whilst we adore the Father for his Love, the Son for his Merit, we have equal Reason to give Glory to the Holy Ghost; who works all our Works in us, preparing us for, and giving us Foretastes of the heavenly Inheritance. And how should the comfortable Sense of our being Heirs of God, and Joint-Heirs with Christ, under the Witnessings of this Spirit, reconcile us to all Afflictions

flitions by the Way, and make us long to pass over *Jordan*, to take Possession of the promised Land; where our everlasting Doxology will be to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, Father, Son, and Spirit, be Glory, and Honour, and Praise, for ever. *Amen.*





SERMON VIII.

The BELIEVER SEALED.



EPHES. i. 13, 14.

— *In whom also, after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of Promise, which is the Earnest of our Inheritance.*

THIS Chapter contains an Epitome of the Gospel, in which the Apostle, after his usual Salutation, wishing Grace to the Saints at *Ephesus*, adores the God and Father of our Lord *Jesus Christ*, for blessing his People with all spiritual Blessings in heavenly Places in *Christ*; and,

and, beginning with electing Love, as the Foundation of all other Blessings, he mentions their Adoption into God's Family, their Acceptance in the Beloved, with that Redemption they have through his Blood, attended with the Forgiveness of Sin, and their obtaining an Inheritance, to which they were *predestinated, according to the Purpose of him who works all Things after the Counsel of his own Will*; and that, in Consequence of their being thus ordained unto eternal Life, it was given to them to believe, or put their Trust in the Son of God, after *that they had heard the Word of Truth, the Gospel of their Salvation*: Upon which, he adds the Words of the Text; *In whom also, after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of Promise, which is the Earnest of our Inheritance*. In which we may observe the Order in which spiritual Blessings are conferred: The Gospel is first preach'd, then render'd the Power of God unto Salvation; and when the Report of it is received, he who, as a Spirit of Illumination, convinces of Sin, of Righteousness, and of Judgment, as a Spirit of Promise, seals the Believer, by giving him the Earnest of his Inheritance, until the Redemption of the purchased Possession.

The Meaning of the Word *Seal*, as applied to the Believer, when under the consolatory Influences of the Lord, the Spirit;

and what is intended by the *Earnest*, or first Fruits of our Inheritance, being largely consider'd in the preceding Discourse, what remains of the Subject is, to inquire how far we may know, and safely determine, that a Promise is set *home* upon our Hearts, and our Souls sealed in meditating upon it, by the Spirit of God? a Question of the greatest Importance, as to Christian Experience, though not without its Difficulties. In the Resolution of which, we shall,

I. Lay down some general Rules, taken from the Nature of the Promises, the Manner of their Impression, and the Influence which they have on the Hearts of the Saints.

II. Apply them to some particular Cases, in which the Saints have usually found the greatest Advantage, by conversing with the Promises; and which may serve to direct them how to judge in all others.

I. Then, we are to propose some general Rules, by which we may determine when a Promise is sent from God for our Instruction, Support, or Consolation. And when ever that is the Case,

I. The Promise will be evidently pertinent, and suited to our Circumstances; and this either in the very Letter or Terms of it,
or

or in some Inferences, or Deductions, which we are enabled to gather from it.

The Spirit of God being infinitely wise, can never be supposed to impress upon our Minds a Passage of Scripture for our Comfort, which is either contrary, or foreign to our Case. Thus suppose the Believer enjoying Health of Body, prosperous in his Affairs, comfortable in his Mind, happy in his Friends and Family; such an Intimation as that, *Behold, happy is the Man whom God correcteth; therefore despise not thou the Chastening of the Almighty^a*; or, *Whom the Lord loveth he correcteth, even as a Father the Son, in whom he delighteth^b*; or that of the Apostle; *If ye indure Chastenings, God dealeth with you as with Sons; for what Son is he whom the Father chasteneth not^c*; can hardly be concluded to be given in as special Promises; for, where they are so, they will appear to be as suitable as seasonable; Words fitly spoken, like Apples of Gold in Pictures of Silver: Not that we intend hereby that every Saint should be capable of knowing the exact, precise, critical Meaning of every Portion of Scripture, or of every Promise that is brought home to him; this the most Judicious will not pretend to; but whatever may be the Conceptions which they may form of the Import of a Promise, if it

^a Job v. 17.

^b Prov. iii. 12.

^c Heb. xii. 7.

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is sealed by the Spirit of God upon their Hearts, it will appear to have some Thing agreeable to their Situation, and visibly calculated to administer Relief.

2. When ever a Promise is peculiarly impressed by the Spirit on the Mind of a Christian, there will be some new Degrees of Light, and farther Measures of holy and spiritual Liberty found with him; it is not easy to conceive the surprizing Difference with which the same Person reads, or meditates on the same Promise, at various Seasons: Sometimes it is to him as a dead Letter, or as a Tale that is told; but at other Times, whilst he is musing, the Fire burns, and, e'er he is aware, his Heart becomes like the Chariot of a willing People: Thus the two Disciples, whatever Knowledge they might have before of the Writings of *Moses* and the Prophets, saw Things in a new Light whilst Christ was expounding to them the Scripture; and, upon his disappearing, they say, with Gratitude and Wonder, *Did not our Hearts burn within us whilst he talked with us by the Way, and whilst he opened to us the Scriptures*^d.

Where the Spirit of God is as a Sanctifier, there is Liberty from the reigning Power and Dominion of Sin; where he is as a Comforter, he says to the Prisoners, Go

^d Luke xxiv. 32.

forth,

forth, and there is a *παρρησία*, or holy Boldness, and humble Confidence, which is not so much experienced at other Times; and, for the most Part, the Saint sees considerably farther into the Meaning, or Grace of the Promise than ever he did before. In Consequence of this,

3. The Saint is inabled to enter into the Promise with an appropriating Apprehension of his Interest in the Blessing contained in it, to fasten upon it, rejoice in it, and plead it before the Throne; here his Experience, indeed, is peculiar to himself; nor can Language convey the Description: But when thus inabled to find God's Word, and eat it, it is to him sweet as the Honey, yea, sweeter than the Honey-Comb. The Criminal does not read his Pardon, nor the Heir his Title to a large Inheritance, with so much Pleasure and Satisfaction as the Saint his Charter of Privileges: And where such a Promise as that, *The Lord God is a Sun and a Shield; he will give Grace and Glory; and no good Thing will he withhold from those who walk uprightly*^e, is sealed upon him, it yields a more solid Joy than what can arise from any other Consideration; and though the main of his Portion is reserved for him to the last, and he has only the Pledges and Earnests of it by the Way; yet,

^e Psal. lxxxiv. 11.

being fully persuaded that God is faithful, who has promised, and that all his Promises are Yea, and Amen in Christ Jesus ; when he is enabled by them to see the Grace wherein he stands, he rejoices in Hope, and that sometimes with a Joy unspeakable and full of Glory.

And to this we may add, that the Relish of it usually abides and continues with him for some time ; nor is he, for the most Part, so attentive to the Voice of God at first, as afterwards, when it is fasten'd upon him as a Nail in a sure Place. And when this is the Case,

4. The Believer's Apprehensions of God, and the Riches of his Grace, are proportionably raised and exalted, and his Sense of his own Vileness and Unworthiness more strong and lively.

Satan will sometimes transform himself into the Appearance of an Angel of Light, and may be suffered to lull asleep the carnal presumptuous Sinner, with false and delusive Hopes, founded on mere counterfeit and imaginary Experiences ; but it is as destructive to his Interest, as it is opposite to his Inclination, for the Sinner to be humbled at God's Feet, and lie low in his own Eyes ; where Knowledge puffs up, and *supposed Comfort* renders haughty, proud, and conceited, we have Reason to suspect them ; nor can I ever believe a Promise to be sent
from

from God to the Soul ; but, whilst musing upon it, he will be ready to say with the Prophet, *Wo is me, I am undone, a Man of unclean Lips ; or with Job, I have heard of thee by the Hearing of the Ear ; but now mine Eyes see thee ; therefore I abhor my self in Dust and Ashes.* And whenever he is enabled to look through the Promise, into the heavenly World, and with Pleasure and Propriety, to say, It is *mine*, an Inheritance prepared for *me* ; he will be as thoroughly solicitous after that Holiness, which is to render him meet for it, as he rejoices in that Righteousness which is his Title to it ; nor can we possibly entertain almost a more dishonourable Thought of God, than to imagine that there is any one Word in the Bible, in the Promises, any more than the Precepts, that gives the least Incouragement to that abominable Thing, which his righteous Soul hates.

These are some of the general Rules with which, comparing our Experience, we may form some Judgment how far a Promise is set home upon the Soul by the Spirit of God. Which leads us,

II. To attend to some particular Cases in which the Promises of the Gospel have been more especially owned of God, for the Support of his People. In the Consideration of which, the fore-mentioned Rules will

will appear to have their Use and Importance. As,

1. We may take a View of the Believer in the Morning of his Conversion, the Time of his Espousals, when he first knows what spiritual Peace and Comfort mean. The Promises which are most commonly the Means of Incouragement at that Time, are such as these; *Turn you at my Reproof: Behold, I will pour out my Spirit unto you, I will make known my Words upon you^f. Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: Though your Sins be as Scarlet, they shall be as white as Snow; though they be red like Crimson, they shall be as Wooll^g. Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the Waters, and he that hath no Money; come ye, buy and eat, yea, come buy Wine and Milk without Money, and without Price^h. In the last Day, that great Day of the Feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any Man thirst, let him come unto me and drinkⁱ. Wherefore he is able to save to the utmost, all who come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make Intercession for them^k. Whence the awakened Convert begins to be satisfied of Christ's Power to redeem and save him; and whilst conscious of Guilt, and apprized of his own Unworthiness, he is in Doubt whether he is as willing as able; he sometimes*

^f Prov. i. 23.
ⁱ John vii. 37.

^g Isa. i. 18.
^k Heb. vii. 25.

^h Chap. lv. 1.

hears the still Voice of Christ in such Language as that, *Who hath despised the Day of small Things*¹; or, *He will not break the bruised Reed, nor quench the smoking Flax*^m. *Come unto me all ye who labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you Rest*ⁿ: And, *Who-soever cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out*^o. *Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For every one that asketh, receiveth; and he that seeketh, findeth; and to him that knocketh, it shall be opened. For what Man is there of you, whom, if his Son ask Bread, will give him a Stone? Or if he ask a Fish, will give him a Serpent? If ye then being evil, know how to give good Gifts unto your Children, How much more shall your Father which is in Heaven give good Things to them that ask him*^p.

Now, taking it for granted, that one or the other of these sweet Passages of Scripture dwells on his Mind, following of him from Place to Place, Would he know whether it is from God? Let him, in a Dependance on the Teachings of the Holy Spirit, apply the foregoing Rules, and ask himself, as in the Sight of God, Whether they are not suited to his Case? Whether he has not a more spiritual View of the gracious Import of them? What was that Glow,

¹ Zech. iv. 10.

^m Isa. xlii. 3.

ⁿ Matt. xi. 28.

^o John vi. 37.

^p Matt. vii. 7, 8, 9, 10, 11.

Warmth,

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Warmth, and Power with which they were impressed? Whether for a Time, at least, he was not inabled to rest upon, and rejoice in the Good contained in them? And, what Influence they had upon his Mind, when thinking on the Mercy of God? What farther Views of the Evil of Sin, the Plague of his own Heart, and the Ingratitude of his former Conversation, together with earnest Breathings after more Communion with God, and a greater Likeness to his Son; and if he can set to his Seal in the Presence of a Heart-searching God, and as going to his Bar, that they were to him as Life from the Dead, and furnished out some Degree of solid Comfort and spiritual Joy; whilst stripped of himself, and filled with adoring Apprehensions of sovereign, distinguishing Grace, he was made, more than ever, to hate Sin, and value the Saviour; he may warrantably take them for Messages of Peace, sent from his reconciled God and Father, to excite in him that good Hope, through Grace, which shall never leave him ashamed.

2. We may consider the Saint under sore Trials, great and pressing Afflictions.

Trouble is common to all; *Man is born to it as the Sparks fly upwards*; he is of *few Days, and full of Trouble*; nor are the best of Men exempt from it; many are the Afflictions of the Righteous, though different
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in their Kind and Degree; sometimes Personal, at other Times Relative, and, in some Instances, they are united; when, with *Job*, they are emptied from Vessel to Vessel, spoiled of their Substance, bereft of their Children, charged as Hypocrites by mistaken Friends, mocked and reviled by their implacable Enemies. Now the Promises which are given to them under such Circumstances, are either for Instruction or Consolation; of the first Kind, are such as that in *Job*; *If they be bound in Fetters, and holden in Cords of Affliction: Then he sheweth them their Work, and their Transgressions that they have exceeded. He openeth also their Ear to Discipline, and commandeth that they return from Iniquity*^a: Or that of *Ezekiel*; *I will cause you to pass under the Rod, and bring you into the Bond of the Covenant. And there shall ye remember your Ways, and all your Doings, wherein ye have been defiled, and ye shall loath your selves in your own Sight, for all the Evils that ye have committed*^r: Or that of *Hosea*; *Therefore behold, I will hedge up thy Way with Thorns, and make a Wall, that she shall not find her Paths. And she shall follow after her Lovers, but shall not find them: Then shall she say, I will go and return to my first Husband; for then it was better with me than now*^t.

^a Job xxxvi. 8, 9, 10.
ii. 6, 7.

^r Ezek. xx. 37, 43.

^t Hosea

Those suited for our Consolation, are,
The eternal God is thy Refuge, and underneath are everlasting Arms: And he shall thrust out the Enemy from before thee, and shall say, Destroy them^t. And that of the Psalmist; For in the Time of Trouble he shall hide me in his Pavillion; in the Secret of his Tabernacle shall he hide me, he shall set me up upon a Rock. When my Father and my Mother forsake me, then the Lord will take me up. Wait on the Lord; and be of good Courage, and he shall strengthen thine Heart: Wait, I say, on the Lord^u. Cast thy Burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee: He shall never suffer the Righteous to be moved^x. It is good for me that I have been afflicted, that I might learn thy Statutes^y. They that sow in Tears, shall reap in Joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious Seed, shall doubtless come again rejoicing, bringing his Sheaves with him^z. And, Thou hast been Strength to the Poor, a Strength to the Needy in his Distress, a Refuge from the Storm, a Shadow from the Heat, when the Blast of the terrible ones is as a Storm against the Wall^a. And, Thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not; for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee

^t Deut. xxxiii. 27.^u Psal. xxvii. 5, 10, 14.^x Psal.

lv. 22.

^y Psal. cxix. 71.^z Psal. cxxvi. 5, 6.^a Isa. xxv. 4.

by thy Name; thou art mine. When thou passest through the Waters, I will be with thee; and through the Rivers, they shall not overflow thee: When thou walkest through the Fire, thou shalt not be burnt; neither shall the Flame kindle upon thee^b. And, Who shall separate us from the Love of Christ? Shall Tribulation, or Distress, or Persecution, or Famine, or Nakedness, or Peril, or Sword^c? Or, Our light Affliction, which is but for a Moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal Weight of Glory^d.

These, and many others of the same Kind, are scatter'd up and down the sacred Oracles, and often given in to the Saint, when ready to sink under the Weight of Afflictions. That they are suitable to such an End, cannot be disputed; and when they have a Tendency to suppress our hard Thoughts of God, to still our Murmuring against him, and ingage us to submit to his Sovereignty, and subscribe to his Disposals, waiting for the promised Issue of the Dispensation, sensible that we are chastized less than our Iniquities deserve; and waiting with Desire, to be thoroughly purged from all remaining Dross, and weaned from the World, we long for Heaven as a Place of sinless Perfection: When they are thus owned of God for these valuable Purposes,

^b Isa. xliii. 1, 2.

^c Rom. viii. 35.

^d 2 Cor. iv. 17.

the Believer may safely conclude they are impress'd on his Mind by a divine Direction or Appointment.

3. If we consider the Saint under dreadful Temptations, in the Midst of Snares, and trembling under the Apprehensions of the Remains of indwelling Sin, and the Danger of being carried away by the Power of his own Corruptions; here also God has not left himself without a Witness, in many exceeding great and precious Promises; nor has any one of these been made of more universal Service than that Declaration of our Lord to *Peter; Simon, Simon, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as Wheat: But I have prayed for thee that thy Faith fail not.* And when this has been brought home to the Soul, and attended with a proper Discovery of his own Insufficiency, and proved the Means of ingaging him to rely on the Care and Faithfulness of his gracious Advocate, he may safely determine whence the Intimation comes; for it cannot be an Enemy who would lead him to be diffident of himself, and to be strong in the Lord, and in the Power of his Might: And when the Apostle says, *The God of Peace shall bruise Satan under your Feet shortly;* How does the Believer sometimes meditate upon it with Pleasure and Satisfaction? As

☞ Luke xxii. 31, 32.

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he knows that none but a God can give him the Victory over this Adversary ; so the Consideration of his being at Peace with him, and reconciled to him in the Blood of his Son, gives him Incouragement to hope that he will do it ; and as he has ingaged to do it shortly, How does this animate him during the Conflict, and excite his Confidence, as to the Issue of it ? and so when he reads, *That there hath no Temptation taken you, but such as is common to Man : But God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above what ye are able ; but will with the Temptation also make a Way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it*^f. It serves, when impressed by the Spirit of God on his Mind, as an Answer to an Objection that may before have harrassed him, as if he was alone in his Temptations, and his Case peculiar to himself : And he is then brought to wait in the faithful Discharge of his Duty, believing that God will either support him under, or break the Snare, and make a Way for his Escape ; the Example of the Apostle, when brought thoroughly to view, and applied closely to himself, is no less instructive than comfortable, whilst he observes, that the Messenger of Satan was sent to prevent too high an Opinion of himself, after the extraordinary Revelation

^f 1 Cor. x. 13.

which had been made to him ; and after he had spread the Case before the Lord, and importunately cried for Help, the Answer was, *My Grace is sufficient for thee ; my Strength shall be made perfect in thy Weakness*^s : Whence the Saint concludes, when warmly meditating upon it, though unable in himself to resist the least Temptation, he can do all Things through Christ's strengthening of him, and fighting under the Banner of this Captain of Salvation, going out in the Strength of this Lion of the Tribe of Judah ; having on the whole Armour of God, he is freed from a slavish Fear of the Enemy, and sometimes inabled to rejoice that no Weapon formed against him shall prosper ; and that in the End, he shall be brought off a Conqueror, yea, more than a Conqueror.

4. View him under great Darknes, complaining of Desertion, and calling in Question all his former Experiences, saying with *Asaph*, *Will the Lord cast off for ever ? and will he be favourable no more ? Is his Mercy clean gone for ever ? Doth his Promise fail for evermore ? Hath God forgotten to be gracious ? Hath he in Anger shut up his tender Mercies*^h ? How suitable to his Case, sometimes, is the Answer of *Manoah's* Wife to her Husband ; *If the Lord were pleased to*

^s 2 Cor. xii. 7, 8, 9.

^h Psal. lxxvii. 7, 8, 9, 10.

destroy, he would not have shown us such Things as theseⁱ. When he has read, or thought of the Relation of the four Lepers, who reasoned with each other, *Why sit we here until we die? If we enter into the City, the Famine is there, and we shall die there; if we sit still, we die also: Now let us fall into the Host of the Assyrians; if they save us alive, we shall live; if they kill us, we shall but die^k*. How has this been owned of God to quicken him in his Application to him for Mercy, in the earnest Language of Job; *Though thou slayest me, yet will I trust in thee: And though he may not be able in this Season of Distress, as at other Times, to trace the Lord in his gracious Dealings with him; yet it is not without its Use, when duly impressed on his Spirit; that he can say with the Man, whose Eyes the Saviour opened, to the inquiring Jews; This one Thing I know, that whereas I was once blind, now I see: And when those precious Promises, attended with Light and Heat, break in upon his Mind, that when Sion said, The Lord hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me; it's answered, ^l Can a Woman forget her sucking Child, that she should not have Compassion on the Son of her Womb? yea, they may forget; yet will I not forget thee. Behold, I have graven thee on the*

ⁱ Judges xiii. 23.
xlix. 14, 15, 16.

^k 2 Kings vii. 4.

^l Isa.

Palms of my Hands, and thy Walls are continually before me : He is obliged to say, melted with the Grace, and astonished with the Condescension, Lord, it is enough ; If I am on thy Heart, ingraven on the Palms of thy Hands, the Time shall come when thou wilt break through every Cloud, and shine upon me as the God of my Salvation : And when he reads what God says to his Church, and is inabled to apply it to himself, What Refreshment attends the Revelation ! ^m Fear not, for thou shalt not be ashamed : Neither be thou confounded, for thou shalt not be put to Shame. For thy Maker is thine Husband, the Lord of Hosts is his Name ; and thy Redeemer, the holy One of Israel, the God of the whole Earth, shall be be called. For a small Moment have I forsaken thee, but with great Mercies will I gather thee. In a little Wrath I hid my Face from thee for a Moment ; but with everlasting Kindness will I have Mercy on thee, saith the Lord, thy Redeemer. For this is as the Waters of Noah unto me : For as I have sworn, the Waters of Noah should no more go over the Earth ; so have I sworn that I would no more be wrath with thee, nor rebuke thee. For the Mountains shall depart, and the Hills be removed, but my Kindness shall not depart from thee ; neither shall the Covenant of my Peace be removed, saith the

^m Isa. liv. 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10.

Lord, that bath Mercy on thee. And thus he concludes with the Apostle, that he has Reason to be content under the most melancholy Dispensations, since he has an Assurance, and is inabled to rest in it, that God will never, no never leave nor forsake him.

5. Supposing the Saint conscious of Guilt, mourning over his Departures from God, with what Savour sometimes does he think of that Passage, *Go, and proclaim these Words towards the North, and say, Return thou backsliding Israel, saith the Lord, and I will not cause mine Anger to fall upon you; for I am merciful, saith the Lord, and I will not keep Anger for ever. Only acknowledge thine Iniquity, that thou hast transgressed against the Lord thy God. Turn, O backsliding Children, saith the Lord, for I am married unto you*ⁿ. Or when the Prophet says, *O Israel, return unto the Lord thy God; for thou hast fallen by thine Iniquity. Take with you Words, and turn to the Lord, say unto him, Take away all Iniquity, and receive us graciously; so will we render the Calves of our Lips*^o: And also that of the Prophet; *I have seen his Ways, and I will heal him also, and restore Comforts unto him, and to his Mourners. I create the Fruit of the Lips; Peace, Peace to him that is afar off, and to him that is near, saith the Lord, and I will heal him*^p. Now,

ⁿ Jer. iii. 12, 13, 14.
lvii. 18, 19.

^o Hos. xiv. 1, 2.

^p Isa.

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where these, or such-like Portions of Scripture come from God, they are attended with a Sight of the Evil of our Conduct, and the Saint filled with Shame and Regret for his past Disloyalty, judging and condemning himself, confesses with *David*, *Against thee, thee only have I sinned and done this Evil in thy Sight*; and sees more of the Value of that Blood, which cleanseth from all Sin, and heartily desirous to forsake every evil Way, receives the Intimation of forgiving Grace, with the utmost Gratitude and Praise.

Lastly, When under Bondage, through Fear of Death, and terrified with the Thoughts of an approaching Dissolution, How reviving is the Promise, *That neither Death nor Life, nor any other Creature, shall be able to separate us from the Love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord*^a. That Christ, by his Death, *destroy'd him who had the Power of Death, that is the Devil*^b: Or that Triumph of the Apostle, *O Death, Where is thy Sting? O Grave, Where is thy Victory? The Sting of Death is Sin; and the Strength of Sin is the Law. But Thanks be to God who giveth us the Victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ*^c. In the View of that, the Enemy appears disarmed, and with *David*, the Saint can say; *Tho' I walk through*

^a Rom. viii. 38, 39.
^b Heb. ii. 14.
^c 1 Cor.

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the dark Valley of the Shadow of Death; I will fear no Evil. Though my Flesh and my Heart fail, God is the Strength of my Heart, and my Portion for ever[†]: Or with Job, I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter Day upon the Earth. And though after my Skin, Worms destroy this Body, yet in my Flesh shall I see God: Whom I shall see for my self, and mine Eyes shall behold, and not another; though my Reins be consumed within me[‡].

Thus it would be easy to show you how richly God has provided for the strong Consolation of the Heirs of Salvation. And if, at any Time, they are at a Loss to determine, whether a Promise is sent to them under a divine Direction, they should ask themselves, Whether it is not proper to them, suited to their Case, and tends to exalt the Redeemer, to humble them before God, and make them thirst after more Fellowship with him, and greater Meetness for the Injoyment of him? where these are the Fruits, we may be satisfied of the Original; it cannot be from themselves; for at other other Times they converse with the same Promises, without any considerable Impression; it cannot be from the mere Working of natural Affections, because Na-

[†] Psal. xxiii. 4. and lxxiii. 26.

[‡] Job xix. 25, 26, 27.

ture cannot rise higher than it self; nor is it the Voice of an Enemy, as contrary to his Nature, and destructive to his Interest. From the Whole we observe,

(1.) That we have here a glorious Proof of the Deity and Personality of the Holy Spirit, as he could not sanctify the Unclean, root out Corruption, and form, maintain and perfect the new Creature, were he not the Lord God Almighty; so neither could he know every Part of the Believer's Case, much less supply him with suitable Comforts, making his troubled Conscience easy, binding up his broken Heart, speaking Peace to him when in the Depths of Distress, were he not Omniscient, Omnipresent, and All-sufficient. And as the Father is said to seal his People by the Spirit of Promise, as the Work be-speaks his Divinity, the Dispensation proves his distinct Personality: So that we may conclude with the Apostle, that *there are three that bear Record in Heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one* ^x.

(2.) Let this encourage the doubting Christian; God's Word is full of Promises, his Spirit can easily apply them, and make them as precious to him as they are great in themselves.

^x 1 John v. 7.

(3.) Hence

(3.) Hence we may learn, that where Persons are Strangers to that Faith which is of the Operation of the Spirit of God, they are mistaken in all their supposed Comforts, their Hope is mere Presumption; for it is *after ye believed ye were sealed*; the Spirit never can be supposed to set his Seal to a Blank, or attest a Falshood. Now the first Evidence of our being Heirs of God, and Joint-Heirs with Christ, is, that it is given to us to believe: He who has not the Spirit as a Sanctifier, can never be supposed to have him as a Comforter.

(4.) This may serve to remove the Charge of Enthusiasm laid against the Saint, when speaking of his Pleasure, in conversing with the Promises; for though he may sometimes be mistaken, through Weakness or Inadvertency; yet a most rational Account may be given of God's dealing in this Manner with his Servants. And where the fore-mentioned Effects attend the Spirit's Sealing, whether immediately, or by a Promise, the Christian may rest easy in himself, and bless the Name of his God, whilst he has Food to eat, that the World knows not of, and a Joy in Believing, which a Stranger intermeddleth not with.

Lastly,

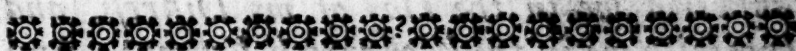
Lastly, Are there so many Promises made to the Believer, whilst here, and not the one half told him of what he shall enjoy hereafter ; How should this raise his Expectation, make him eager to be gone to that World, where the unknown Treasures of Glory shall be possessed as his Inheritance, for ever.





SERMON IX.

The SAINT'S Extremity, GOD'S Opportunity.



MATT. VIII. 25.

And his Disciples came to him, and awoke him, saying, Lord, save us: We perish.



AS it is the indispensable Duty of the reasonable Creature to acknowledge his Obligation to the divine Bounty for every Instance of Kindness and Mercy; so, most certainly, special Deliverances, and more eminent Salvations call for, and should be remember'd with

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with proportionable Gratitude and Thankfulness. Accordingly we find wise Men among the Heathen, and good Men in Scripture, have ever taken particular Notice of the several Acts of God's Goodness towards them; and many of them have carefully preserved Memorials of them, the better to ingage them to celebrate his Praise, and extol his Name, whilst they have called upon, and desired others to join with them in this most becoming and delightful Service: Thus it was the noble Language of a truly grateful Mind, in which *Jacob* be-speaks his Family; *Let us arise, and go up to Bethel; and I will make there an Altar unto God, who answer'd me in the Day of my Distress, and was with me in the Way which I went*^a. And it was by a divine Appointment, and in pursuance of an Order from Heaven, that the *Israelites* were obliged to commemorate their Deliverance from the *Egyptian* Bondage in the solemn Feast of the Passover, once every Year. And^b how did *Moses*, the Servant of the Lord, at the Head of the People, whom he had chosen, proclaim the Glory of the God of *Israel*, in a triumphant Song of Praise, acknowledging the Mercy which they had received in the Overthrow of *Pharaoh* and his Host in the *Red Sea*. And we are expressly told the Design of *Jo-*

^a Gen. xxxv. 3.

^b Exod. xv.

Joshua in pitching certain Stones in *Gilgal*, was to transmit to Posterity the Miracle of *Israel's* passing dry through *Jordan*, and that all the People of the Earth might know the Hand of the Lord, that it was mighty^c. And thus when a Victory was obtained over the *Philistines*, *Samuel* the Prophet erects his *Ebenexer*, with this Motto, *Hitherto the Lord hath helped us*^d. And the Time would fail us were we to recount the various Instances of this Kind we have in the sacred Oracles; yea, we must transcribe the greatest Part of the Book of *Psalms*, were we to show you how much this was the chosen darling Imployment of holy *David*, whose Soul was peculiarly tuned for the high Praises of his God: But it's observable, that he had some distinguishing Mercies in View, when he says, comforting his Soul in a Time of Affliction; *O my God, my Soul is cast down within me: Therefore will I remember thee from the Land of Jordan, and of the Hermonites, from the Hill Mizar*^e. Nor have we any one Duty more frequently recommended or practised by the inspired Writers of the New Testament than this of Praise, or giving Thanks to God for Mercies received. So that you see we act upon the best of Principles, and in Conformity to the most

^c *Josh.* iv. 24.^d *1 Sam.* vii. 12.^e *Psal.* xlii. 6.

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excellent and approved Examples; when, at the Desire of a worthy and pious Gentleman^f, we call you to the Work of this Day; which is solemnly to recognize a glorious Instance of the divine Benignity, a Miracle, indeed, of Mercy vouchsafed to him, and others in Company with him, on this Day^g two and twenty Years ago; the Particulars of the memorable Story will be given in the Close of the Discourse.

The Suitableness of the Words chosen, to the Occasion will, appear from observing that the Cases were almost Parallel, excepting that the Circumstances of our Friend seem to have been attended with greater Difficulty and Extremity. The Reason of the Disciples applying to our Saviour, with the Concern expressed in the Text, you have from the sacred Historian, to this Purpose: Our Lord entering into a Ship, to avoid the Throng of the People who were pressing after him from every Quarter; on a sudden a Storm arose, and the Wind being boisterous, the Ship was cover'd with the Waves, and being ready to sink, the affrighted, distressed Disciples run to him, who was by this Time asleep, and hastily awaking him, cry'd out, *Lord, save us: We perish.* Upon which our Lord gently reproving them for their Unbelief, as if,

^f *John Dean, Esq; his Majesty's Consul at Ostend.*

^g This Sermon was preached *January 4, 1733.*

after all the Miracles which they had seen wrought by him, there could be any Danger whilst he was in Company, in the Language of Deity, rebukes the Winds and the Sea, *and there was a great Calm*; so that the Men marvelling, said one to another, *What Manner of Man is this, that even the Winds and the Sea obey him!* Now as this was written for our Instruction, we may collect from it, that the Lord was the true Messiah, or the Prophet, who was to be sent into the World to teach and save his People, which was incontestably evident by the mighty Works which were wrought by him, of which this was one not a little Illustrious.

As also that he had a Nature superior to that in which he appeared to the *Jews*, and was truly God as well as Man; inasmuch as he held the Winds in ^h his fist, and could at pleasure controul the most unruly Element; and at the same Time we may observe how wise and kind a Part he acted by his Disciples; wisely in suffering them to be brought into such Circumstances as to stand in need of his Help, and in which they must be sensible of their Inability to help themselves, and at the same Time, mercifully, by laying hold on this Opportunity, to let them see how much he was concern'd

^h Prov. xxx. 4.

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in their Wellfare, and how ready to help them in every Time of Need. And taking the Words in this Light, we may observe in them,

I. The gloomy and affrightive Prospect which the Disciples had of immediate Death, and inevitable Destruction; *Lord, save us : We perish !*

II. The Expedient which they made Use of, or the Refuge to which they betook themselves in this their Extremity; and that was earnest and importunate Prayer to the Redeemer; *Lord, save us.* And,

III. The Success which attended their Application to him, though they had dishonoured him by their Unbelief: *He arose and rebuked the Winds and the Sea, and there was a great Calm.*

I. Then, we have terrible Apprehensions, which the Disciples were under of perishing immediately; *Lord, save us : We perish.*

That *Man is born to Trouble as the Sparks fly upwards*, is a Maxim as abundantly verified in Experience, as clearly declar'd in Revelation. Sin has introduced a Train of innumerable Evils which human Nature is incident to, in its present State of Depravity and Imperfection. And as there are none but, at one Time or other, have their Troubles; so good Men, how-

however distinguished in other Respects, are not exempted from Trials, yea, frequently have a large Share of them, and sometimes are reduced to the greatest Extremity: This was, doubtless, the Case of *Lot*, that righteous Man, when taken Prisoner, and carried away by his Enemies, from whom he had nothing to look for but cruel Usage, and oppressive Bondage: And what Distress must the Patriarch *Jacob* be in, when Tidings reach'd him of his Brother *Esau's* coming out against him with an armed Force to avenge the Quarrel he had against him, on Account of the Loss of his Birth-right, and the Blessing. Nor is it easy to conceive what Anxiety must seize the Mind of *Joseph*, when thrown into a Pit, sold to the *Ishmaelites*, and imprison'd in *Egypt*, the Thoughts of what he had lost in a Banishment from his Father, whom he so much lov'd, and of what he had met with from the Hands of his unnatural Brethren, as well as the Hardships which he suffered unjustly for the Answer of a good Conscience towards God: Such Reflections must, no Doubt, be attended with a great Deal of Sorrow and Bitterness. And though the Lord had shown how much he was concerned for his People *Israel*, when, by a mighty Hand, and out-stretched Arm, he brought them out of *Egypt*; yet this hinder'd not, but presently afterwards they are in such a

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Strait, as to give up all for lost, and to murmur and cry out against *Moses*, by reason of their Enemies behind them, the Sea before them, and the Mountains which encompassed them, rendering their Escape impossible, unless a Miracle were wrought in their Favour. And thus holy *Job*, after all the Account we have of him, ⁱ that there was none like him in the Earth, a perfect and an upright Man, one who feared God and eschewed Evil; this did not secure him from Affliction; but we find him stripped of all his Substance, bereft of his Children, the Scorn of the People, and condemned as an Hypocrite by his Friends, with a diseased Body, a Burden to himself, and to all about him. And though Providence did concern it self wonderfully for *David*; yet how was he hunted like a Partridge on the Mountains, ill requited and persecuted by *Saul*, for all the great Services which he had done for him and the People. And when the *Amalakites* burnt *Ziklag*, and took away his Wives, and the Wives of all who were with him, with all their Substance, it could not but be exceedingly grievous to hear his own Men, who served under him talk of killing him; and how cutting was the Affliction which arose from the unnatural Rebellion and untimely Death

Job i. 8.

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of his Son *Abfolom*. And if to thefe you add the fpiritual Trouble which took Place at Times, in the Minds of thefe excellent Saints, on account of their own Backfidings, the Temptations of the Enemy, and the Hidings of God's Face, it will then appear, that as they had their Fears and Fightings all the Way to Heaven; fo, through much Tribulation, they got into the Injoyment of it: So that the Difciples in the Text, were not alone in their Diftrefs. Danger, Trouble and Affliction, is the common Lot of Saints, what they are all to expect; as our Lord fays, *In the World ye fhall have Tribulation* ^k. But that we may give you an Inftance or two which comes nearer to the Cafe of the Difciples, hear how *Jonah* represents the melancholy, and, to all Appearance, desperate Circumftance, into which he had brought himfelf by his Rebellion and Difobedience; *I cried, fays he*^l, *by reafon of mine Affliction unto the Lord, and he heard me; out of the Belly of Hell cried I, and thou heardeft my Voice. For thou hadft caft me into the Deep, in the Midft of the Seas, and the Floods compaffed me about, all thy Billows and thy Waves paffed over me. Then I faid, I am caft out of thy Sight; yet I will look again towards thy holy Temple. The Waters compaffed me about even to*

^k John xvi. 33.

^l Jonah ii. 2—8.

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the Soul: The Depth closed me round about, the Weeds were wrapped about my Head. I went down to the Bottoms of the Mountains; the Earth with her Bars was about me for ever, when my Soul fainted within me, &c. The other Instance is that of the Apostle Paul, and the Company which were with him; an Account of whose Shipwreck we have in these Terms; *That there arose a tempestuous Wind, called Euroclydon. And when the Ship was caught, and could not bear up into the Wind, we let her, says the Apostle, drive. And running under a certain Island, which is called Claudia, we had much work to come by the Boat: Which when they had taken up, they used Helps, undergirding the Ship; and fearing lest they should fall into the Quicksands, strake Sail, and so were driven. And being exceedingly tossed with a Tempest, the next day they lightened the Ship; And the third Day we cast out with our own Hands the Tackling of the Ship. And when neither Sun nor Stars in many Days appeared, and no small Tempest lay on us, all Hope that we should be saved, was then taken away^m. And at length falling into a Place where two Seas met, the Ship run aground, and the Fore-part sticking fast remained immovable; and the Hinder-part being broke with the Violence of the Waves, with much*

Difficulty and Hazard, some by swimming, and others *on broken Pieces of the Ship, escaped safe to Land*. Nor can we have a more striking or lively Description of a Storm than what is given by the *Psalmist*, who thus addresses himself to his Fellow-creatures; *Oh that Men would praise the Lord for his Goodness, and for his wonderful Works to the Children of Men! They that go down to the Sea in Ships, that do Business in great Waters: These see the Works of the Lord, and his Wonders in the Deep. For he commandeth, and raiseth the stormy Wind, which lifteth up the Waves thereof. They mount up to the Heaven, they go down again to the Depths, their Soul is melted because of Trouble. They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken Man, and are at their Wits Endⁿ*. And if we take into the Disciple's Case, a Supposition that they might be under the Gnawings of a guilty and accusing Conscience, and might be affraid of Hell as well as Death, we need not wonder that with such Vehemence and Importunity they cry out, *Lord, save us: We perish*. Which leads us,

II. To the Expedient which they made Use of, or the Refuge to which they betook themselves in this Time of their Extremity; and that was humble and earnest Prayer: *Lord, save us*.

ⁿ Psal. cvii. 21—28.

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Prayer is the reasonable Service and invaluable Privilege of a Child of God, a Duty which he would be in the Performance of at all Times, but especially in the Day of Trouble; and when it is the Prayer of Faith, it supposes a Conviction of God's Right to worship, of his Capacity to hear, and judge of our Case, of his Power to help in every Time of Need, and of his Mercy, as a God reconciled in Christ, which inclines him to attend to the Voice of our Supplication: Accordingly we may reasonably conclude, that the Disciples had not applied to our Lord in their Danger, but as satisfied that he was equal to the Instance of Mercy which they wanted from him. The Mariners, with *Jonah*, cried every one to his God, and it can hardly be supposed, that they would have said, *Lord, save us: We perish*; but from a Belief that he could, if he pleased, command the Blessing, and secure the desired Event: Nor in this did they act a weak or superstitious Part; for he that made all Things, *and without whom was not any Thing made which was made*: He that upholds all Things, and by whom all Things consist, can certainly say to the Winds, *Be still*; and to the Waves of the Sea, *Hitherto shall ye go, and no farther*: Nor have any of the Saints, at any Time, what Assurances soever they have had of the Favour of God, in securing them a comfortable

able Passage through this World, and an happy Admittance into a better, allow'd themselves in the Neglect of this Duty; but being sensible that he who does all for them freely, will yet be inquir'd of by them, they have by Prayer and Supplication, with Thanksgiving, made known their Requests unto him. Thus how did *Jacob*, when affraid of his Brother, pour out his Soul to God; *O God of my Father Abraham, and God of my Father Isaac, the Lord which saidst unto me, Return unto thy Country and to thy Kindred, and I will deal well with thee: I am not worthy of the least of all the Mercies, and of all the Truth, which thou hast shewed unto thy Servant; for with my Staff I passed over this Jordan, and now I am become two Bands. Deliver me, I pray thee, from the Hand of my Brother, from the Hand of Esau: For I fear him, lest he will come and smite me and the Mother with the Children. And thou saidst, I will surely do thee Good, and make thy Seed as the Sand of the Sea, which cannot be numbered for Multitude°. And afterwards, upon his sending Benjamin into Egypt, how fervently does he express himself; God Almighty give you Mercy before the Man, that he may send away your other Brother, and Benjamin: If I am bereaved, I am bereaved^p. And thus good *Hezekiah*, upon*

° Gen. xxxii. 9—13.

^p Chap. xliii. 14.

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the Receipt of *Rabshakeb's* blasphemous Letter, went up into the House of the Lord, and spread it before the Lord, praying, O Lord God of Israel, which dwellest between the Cherubims, thou art the God, even thou alone, of all the Kingdoms of the Earth, thou hast made Heaven and Earth. Lord, bow down thine Ear, and hear: Open, Lord, thine Eyes, and see: And hear the Words of *Sennacherib*, which hath sent him to reproach the living God. Now therefore, O Lord our God, I beseech thee, save thou us out of his Hand, that all the Kingdoms of the Earth may know that thou art the Lord God, even thou only^a. And so when *Zerah the Ethiopian* came up against *Asa*, with an Host of a thousand Thousand, and three hundred Chariots, after *Asa* had set the Battle in Array, he cried unto the Lord his God, and said, Lord, it is nothing with thee to help, whether with many, or with them that have no Power: Help us, O Lord our God; for we rest on thee, and in thy Name we go against this Multitude: O Lord, thou art our God, let not Man prevail against thee^r.

And so when the Children of *Moab* and *Ammon*, came up against *Jehoshaphat* to Battle, we are told, he feared, and set himself to seek the Lord, and proclaimed a Fast throughout all *Judah*; and standing publick-

^a 2 Kings xix. 14, 15, 16, 19.

^r 2 Chron. xiv. 11, 12.

ly in the Midst of the Congregation, in the House of the Lord, he pray'd, *O Lord God of our Fathers, art thou not God in Heaven? rulest thou not over all the Kingdoms of the Heathen? and in thy Hands is there not Power and Might, so that none is able to withstand thee? Behold, the Children of Ammon, and Moab, are come to cast us out of that Possession, which thou hast given us to inherit: But, O Lord, wilt thou not judge them? for we have no Might against this great Company that cometh against us, neither know we what to do; but our Eyes are up unto thee*^f. And thus we find Daniel in a Case of Difficulty and Importance, calling in his three Friends, *Hananiab, Mishael, and Azariab*, intreating of them, that they would desire Mercy of the God of Heaven, concerning the Secret of the King's Dream, that he and his Fellows might not perish, with the rest of the wise Men of *Babylon*^g. And thus, how importunate was the poor Woman of *Canaan*? crying out, *Have Mercy upon me, O Lord, thou Son of David; my Daughter is grievously vexed with a Devil*: And how fervently did she cry out, *Lord help me!* And when she is told, that Children's Bread is not to be cast to Dogs, how affectionately does she plead, even for Crumbs which fall from the Table^h? And

^f 2 Chron. xx. 1, 5, 6, 10, 12.

^g Dan. ii. 17, 18.

^h Matt. xv. 22.

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our Lord himself, in his Agony, fell on his Face, and pray'd, saying, *O Father, if it be possible, let this Cup pass from me* ^x. And the Apostles, when threaten'd by their Enemies, lift up their Cries unto Heaven, that God would grant unto them, his Servants, *that with all Boldness they might speak his Word* ^y. And in a particular Case, the great Apostle tells us, he *besought the Lord thrice*. So that this has evidently been the Practice of the Saints in all Ages, in the Day of their Trouble, they have run to God as their Refuge; and the Language of God, in such a Season, is, *Call upon me; Seek my Face*: In Conformity to which Direction, the Saints are a Generation of Seekers, who seek the Face of the God of *Jacob*. Which brings us,

III. To consider the Success they met with: *He arose, rebuked the Winds and the Sea, and there was a great Calm.*

And if you look over the Instances before cited, where the Righteous have lift up their Cries to God, you will find, that in each of them he was a God, hearing and answering Prayer. How was the Heart of *Esau* turned to his Brother *Jacob*? and all those Things, which the good old Patriarch thought to make against him, how wonder-

^x Matt. xxvi. 39.

^y Acts iv. 24.

fully were they over-ruled, and admirably conducted to the Welfare of himself and Family? *Hezekiah* prays, and the Angel of the Lord smites no less than an hundred four Score and five Thousand of the *Assyrians*; and *Sennacherib* their King, is slain by the Hands of his own Sons; and that huge Host of the *Ethiopians*, upon *Asa's* Prayer, fled, and could not recover themselves; for they were destroy'd before the Lord, and before his Host. And *Jehoshaphat*, having pour'd out his Soul before God, finds his Enemies slain to his Hands; has nothing to do but to bless God, and to divide the Spoil. *Daniel*, and his Companions, pray'd in the Evening; and in the Night Vision the Secret is reveal'd. And after all the seeming Repulses of the poor Woman of *Canaan*, she is sent away fully satisfied, with a high Encomium, *O Woman! great is thy Faith; be it unto thee even as thou wilt.* And the Apostle tells us, that when our Lord, *in the Days of his Flesh, offered up Prayers and Supplications, with strong Crying and Tears unto him, that was able to save him from Death, he was heard, in that he fear'd^z.* And when the Apostles pray'd, the Place was shaken, and they were filled with the Holy Ghost, and, according to their Request, were inabled to

^z Heb. v. 7.

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speak the Word of God with great Boldness. *Paul* besought the Lord thrice, and has for Answer, *My Grace is sufficient for thee.* And innumerable are the Instances of the same Kind, which might be produced from Scripture, and the Experience of the Saints. God has approved himself faithful to his Promises, by which they have been encouraged in their Addresses to him; only let it be remember'd,

1. That God is not obliged to answer his People, from any other Consideration than that of his own Mercy and loving Kindness; they have no constraining Power over him, nor any Claim or Demand of Merit upon him; was he to enter into Judgment with them, and deal with them according to their Iniquities, he might justly shut out their Prayers, and refuse all Help or Relief in the Day of their Trouble; whenever he vouchsafes it, it is as the Lord God, gracious and merciful; for the best have deserved, on the Account of their Transgressions, to be left to all the Miseries of this World, and everlasting Destruction in the other.

2. Though God has promised his People complete Salvation, from all Distress in the End, yet he has reserved in his own Hands the Time when, and the Manner in which he will secure the Blessing to them; nor will he be directed, or prescribed to by them,

them, but in his own appointed Time and Way, commands Deliverance for them; he has promised, indeed, when they pass through the Water, he will be with them, and through the Rivers, they shall not overflow them; when they walk through the Fire, they shall not be burned; nor will he ever totally leave or forsake them, his everlasting Arms will be underneath them for their Support; and when it is most for his Glory, and their Good, when the Mercy will be most prized and valued by them, will he make bare his Arm in their Favour; so that if God should not presently seem to answer our Requests in the Time of our Distress, we are not either to impeach his Faithfulness, or charge him with Unkindness, perhaps we are not as yet sufficiently prepared for the Mercy, or our Faith and Patience are to have farther Exercise and Improvement; however, we may rest assured, that it shall not be delay'd one Moment longer than infinite Wisdom sees it to be necessary; and, perhaps, the Blessing would not be so abundantly welcome, if God were not sometimes to suffer us to be reduced to a very low Ebb, and almost to the last Extremity.

APPLICATION.

1. From the Circumstances of the Disciples, in the Text, we learn, that we should never say, either as to Spirituals, or Temporals, whilst out of Hell, that our Case is wholly desperate, and will admit of no Relief. What though our Sins have been more numerous than the Sands, and attended with the most heinous Aggravations, the Reflection may justly cover us with Confusion, and fill us with Shame and Sorrow: But to despair, and say they are greater than can be forgiven, is to wrong the Mercy of the Father's Heart, to deny the infinite Merit of the Son's Blood; nor is there any Corruption so deeply rooted in our Hearts, but it is easy with Omnipotence to destroy it: Is any Thing too hard for God? So that *David* might well say to his Soul, *Why art thou cast down? Why art thou disquieted within me? Hope thou in God.* For he gives Power to the Faint, and to them who have no Might he increases Strength. It is the Glory of the Redeemer, that he saves to the utmost, all who come to him: It is the Promise of his Grace; he who comes to him, he will in no wise cast out; and it is as much his Delight as it is his Honour, to give Rest to every weary and burden'd Soul; the Question is not so much

much, Whether Christ can or will save? as, Whether we are made truly willing to come unto him, that we may be saved? for in the shedding of his Blood, he gave us the fullest Proof of his Friendship to Sinners; for if whilst they were Enemies against him, Christ died for them, how much more, being reconciled, may they hope for Salvation by him, who ever lives to make Intercession for them? The same may be said with respect to the most difficult Situation in Life, where Circumstances are the most perplexed and intangled: God can find out a Way though we see none; and in the darkest Season of Adversity, can easily cause the Sun-shine of Prosperity to break out upon us.

2. Would we fain get rid of our Burden, and are we solicitous after Ease and Satisfaction; let us spread our Case before the Lord, and cast our Care upon him: This you see has been the Practice of the Saints in all Ages; and they have ever found their Account in it; and we find something of this in common Cases: It gives some Ease to the oppressed Mind, though we only impart the Case to a faithful Friend. And *David* found, to his Cost, that when he kept Silence, his Bones waxed old; Day and Night God's Hand was heavy upon him, and his Moisture was turned into the

O

Drought

194 *The Saint's Extremity,*

Drought of Summer: But when he was brought to acknowledge his Sin, and said, *I will confess my Transgressions unto the Lord*, he had an immediate Sense of pardoning Mercy given in; for he adds, *and thou forgavest the Iniquity of my Sin*; and upon this he founds his Direction to every one that is godly, to pray unto God in a Time when he may be found, since he is their hiding Place, who will preserve them from Trouble, and compass them about with Songs of Deliverance. And this is the Apostle's Advice, *That we should be careful*; that is, over anxious about nothing; but *by Prayer and Supplication, with Thanksgiving, make known our Requests unto God*.

3. As every Mercy calls for Praise, so especially where God hath appeared in a Time of imminent Danger and great Distress, he expects to hear from us in a Way of Thanksgiving: Thus says *David*^a, *I will bless the Lord at all Times; his Praise shall continually be in my Mouth. My Soul shall make her Boast in the Lord*: And he invites others to join with him in the Work. *O magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt his Name together: For I sought the Lord, and he heard me, and delivered me out of all my Troubles*. And speaking of

^a Psal. xxxiv. 1, 2, 4, 6.

him-

himself, he says ; *This poor Man cried, and the Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his Troubles.* And elsewhere he says, *Blessed be the Lord ; for he hath shewed me his marvellous loving Kindness in a strong City.* For I said in my Haste, I am cut off from before thine Eyes : Nevertheless thou heardst the Voice of my Supplication, when I cried unto thee ^b. And our Lord mentions it to the Dishonour of the Lepers, whom he had healed, that there was but one found who returned to give Glory to God, and he was a Stranger ^c. Nothing can be more ungrateful on our Part, and more highly provoking in the Sight of the Lord, than slightly to pass over, or disingenuously to forget remarkable Salvations ; nor should we content our selves with rendering to him the Praise of our Lips, and, like *Israel* of old, soon forget his Works ; but make it our constant Request, that as he is loading us with his Benefits, and following us with his Goodness, blessing us continually with one Deliverance after another, we may obtain Grace to render him the Affection of our Hearts, and the Obedience of our Lives, as the least Return we can make him for such manifold and enlarged Obligations. And I need only give you some short

^b Psal. xxxi. 21, 22.

^c Luke xvii. 16, 17.

196 *The Saint's Extremity, &c.*

Hints of that almost marvellous Preservation, which the Gentleman, at whose Desire we are met together this Day, was favoured withal, to ingage you to join with him (though at a considerable Distance) in giving Honour to him, who so well deserves the Name of a Saviour and a great One.





A N
A B S T R A C T
 O F



Conful *Dean's* NARRATIVE.

This poor Man cried, and the Lord heard him ; and saved him out of all his Troubles. Psalm xxxiv. 6.



MR. JOHN DEAN, Commander of the *Nottingham Galley*, an hundred and twenty Tons, and fourteen Men, sailed *September 25, 1710.* for *New England* ; but meeting with contrary Winds, and bad Weather, discerned not the Land, then covered with Snow, till the 11th of *December* ; and then soon lost Sight of it again by a Fog and hazy
 Wea-

Weather. About eight or nine of the Clock that Night the Ship struck, with great Violence, against a Rock, called *Boon-Island*; upon which, having cut away their Shrouds, and the Masts being broke by the Violence of the Sea, those who could swim, having committed themselves to the Mercy of God in a short Prayer, flung themselves into the raging Element, and with great Difficulty got up the Rock, being sorely bruised by the Waves dashing them against it; and particularly, this was the Case of the Captain, who very narrowly escaped drowning, being obliged to catch hold of the Rock with such impetuous Force, as tore off the Flesh and Nails from his Fingers: However, it pleased God, that though the Night was exceeding dark, and the Storm violent, there was not one Life lost. But being got together about ten that Night, with joyful Hearts they returned their Thanks to God for their marvellous Deliverance: Upon which, in vain they look'd for Shelter from the Extremity of the Cold, Snow, and Rain; for the Rock was a mere Rock, without a Shovel-full of Earth, or a single Shrub growing upon it; not exceeding an hundred Yards in Length, and in Breadth, fifty, at high Water; and so very craggy, that they could not walk on it to keep themselves warm.

Next

Next Day the Captain went to the Place where the Wreck was, hoping to find some Provision; but met with nothing eatable but a few Pieces of Cheese, which, in the Whole, might amount to about two whole Cheeses. After many Attempts to get Fire, for eight or ten Days together, they found it impracticable; the few Materials they had being so much wetted by the Sea.

The second Night, they stowed one upon another, under some Canvas, if possible, to keep each other warm.

The third Day proved a clear Frost; when the Master began to be sensible where they were; and gave the Men all the Encouragement that he could, though he had very little Hope in himself; it being a Season of the Year when very few Vessels, if any, came that way.

The fourth Day the Cook of the Ship, not much used to the Hardships of the Sea, made great Complaints, and, about Noon, died; and they placed his Corps near low Water-Mark; and the next returning Tide carried it away.

The Master's Work, all this while, was to dress the Wounds of such who had Hurt from the Rock, or who had Ulcers arising from the Extremity of the Cold.

The

The first Enterprize of Moment, was the erecting of a Tent, which they cover'd the best they could, with Sails and old Canvas,

The next Work was, an Attempt to build a Boat out of the Timber and Plank, collected from the Wreck; and after great Pain, and much Difficulty, they finished a small one, which they had no sooner launched, but it was dashed to Pieces by the swelling of the Sea. With the Boat they lost their Ax and Hammer, and very narrowly escaped drowning themselves.

By this Time their little Stock of Cheese was consumed, and nothing left to support them, but a little Rock-Weed, and a few Muscles, of which they had but three a Day for each Man, they were so very scarce.

Their next Work was to build a small Raft; upon which two Men venturing, were presently cast away, and one of them found, about two Days after, with a Paddle in his Hand, about a Mile distant from the Raft, which was drove ashore.

Their Necessity, with respect to Water, was pretty well supplied with Rain, and melted Snow; and in frosty Weather, with Ice, which was fresh, though congealed by salt Water. But Hunger was so exceeding sharp,

sharp, and all Provision now spent ; towards the latter End of *December*, the Carpenter dying, a young Gentleman, though delicately educated, was the first that proposed converting the human Carcass into the Matter of their Nourishment, with which, after great Debates, and much Reluctance, they all, at length, complied ; and continued eating this dreadful Provision till the second of *January* ; when the Master, to his great Joy and Surprise, saw a Shallop standing directly towards the Rock, under a brisk Gale of Wind : About Noon one of the Men came on Shore from the Shallop, and brought some Fire with him, but no Provision ; and the Weather being exceeding bad, the Shallop was obliged to weigh Anchor, and leave them that Night, with a Promise of coming the next Day better provided to carry them off. You may easily imagine they spent that Night, and the next Day (when no Shallop returned) between Hope and Despair ; though somewhat more comforted, as having now a little Fire.

In the Midst of this Extremity, and when all their Provision was so far spent as to be allotted for the next Meal, on the fourth of *January*, in the Morning, whilst at Prayer, they were surprized with the Report of a Musket ; and looking out, saw

a Vessel come to take them in, by which, that Day, they were carried up the River, and comfortably provided for by the Generosity and Beneyolence of some worthy Gentlemen.

Upon which, in some Time, upon taking proper Physick, and limited Diet, they all recovered; though every one except the Master, by the Extremity of the Cold, lost the Use of Fingers or Toes; and particularly the Master's Boy lost the Use of his Feet,

This was the great Salvation which this pious Gentleman desires should be commemorated; and as is was altogether the Doing of the Lord, and at that Time exceedingly marvellous in their Eyes, so he is concerned that the Mercy should not be forgotten; but from Year to Year, be acknowledged with suitable Gratitude and Praise. Let us then join with him, who, I doubt not, is imploy'd this Day in the same Service, saying, Blessing, and Honour, and Glory, and Praise, be to thee, O Lord, the great Creator and Preserver of Men; who was pleased to have Pity on thy Servant in his low Estate; and when many Sorrows compassed him about, and Death, in every Shape, presented it self in the Time of his Extremity, thou hast made
bare

bare thine Arm for his Salvation. We laud
and magnify thy Name, and give thee
that Glory which is thy Due; who hearest
the Cries of the Humble, and savest him out
of all his Troubles. To thee be Glory for
ever and ever. *Amen.*

F I N I S.

E R R A T A.

PAGE 50. Line 10. read, *furnished to be the Finisher, as he
is to be the Author.* P. 81. last Line, for *the* r. *their*.
P. 108. l. 19. for *do* r. *to*. P. 122. l. 28. for *Ears* r. *Ear*.
P. 133. l. 28. for *aware* r. *were*. P. 135. l. 18. for *Saints*
r. *Saint*. P. 156. l. 11. for *upon* r. *unto*. P. 196. l. 1. for
marvelous r. *miraculous*.



BOOKS Printed for AARON
WARD, at the King's Arms in
Little-Britain.

1. A Sermon occasion'd by the Death of Mr. *Edward Chamberlain*, late Master of the Charity-School in *Shakespeare's Walk*. Preach'd to the Society who support it, *March 9, 1732*.

2. God's Compassion to an ungrateful People, consider'd in a Sermon; the Substance of which was preach'd at the late Reverend Dr. *Ridgley's* Meeting-Place, near *Thames-street*, *April 6, 1732*.

3. The Duty of the People to their Pastor; represented in a Discourse preach'd at the Ordination of the Reverend *George Braithwaite*, M. A. *March 28, 1734*. at the Meeting-House near *Devonshire-Square*.
These Three by Mr. *Wilson*.

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4. Submission to the Righteousness of God: Or, the Necessity of trusting to a better Righteousness than our own. Opened and defended in a plain practical Discourse upon *Romans x. 3*. By *B. Jenks*, late Rector of *Harley* in *Shropshire*, and Chaplain to the Right Honourable the Earl of *Bradford*.

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